

The White Paper and restructuring the academic labour market

The paper seeks to illustrate those mechanisms which allow the strengthening of market and patriarchal forces in higher education, especially as they relate to the academic labour market.

The Dawkins paper, Higher Education, a Policy Statement (the White Paper) represents an attempt to implement a major restructuring process in tertiary education, which has not occurred in Australia for many decades. It is designed to put into place a number of key mechanisms which will have a very real economic base. These mechanisms include:

- new funding arrangements which will be more market-driven;
- new curriculum priorities which will also be more market-driven;
- staffing policies which will be "productivity" driven.

New funding arrangements

The White Paper attempts to construct a wider funding base for tertiary education, both for its teaching and its research activities. It proposes a structure which enforces a form of the user-pays principle at the individual student level (the graduate tax), and drives groups of academics and departments/faculties to attract corporate (and other outside) funding at the institutional level. The government hopes that individual tax debits and corporations' funding for research and teaching will allow it to further withdraw its own funding commitments, and at the same time concentrate its research funding in specific "targeted" areas.¹ Until this point in time institutions distributed their general purpose operating grants according to institutionally-determined priorities. Under the White Paper such grants to each institution are to be cut by 1% between 1989 and 1991, and then by 2.5% a year (initially \$26m and then \$60m per annum). The resultant pool of funds will be controlled by the National Board of Employment, Education and Training (NBEET) which will redirect (via the appropriate councils, eg Australian Research Council) the money to higher education institutions or other "trainers" who offer to mount specific short-term courses in the national priority areas and those who successfully bid for funding for research, again mainly in the targeted areas.

New curriculum priorities

By targeting specific areas for research funding, the Government is changing the pattern of curriculum priorities. It is giving priority to those subject areas which more directly serve the needs of business and industry, for example, business and administrative studies, computer science, and other applied sciences. A competitive bidding structure for research funding is being put into place, a structure which is forcing institutions to construct "profiles" that reflect Government priorities rather than earlier institutional priorities. Institutions will have to use these profiles to compete for both Federal Government funding and corporate (and some semi-government level) funding. The competition is not only between separate institutions, but between different departments/disciplines within individual institutions. Individual and team researchers at private institutions like the Bond University will also have access to Federal Government research funding. Such researchers will be able to mount proposals that will be treated in the same way as proposals from all other institutions. Thus Government funds will subsidise private profit-making concerns, whose curriculum priorities will be more likely to serve business interests than general education interests. Those subject areas and institutions which already serve more directly the needs of business and industry will be the 'successful' bidders, with many areas of the social sciences and the humanities failing to get such funding. This then makes them targets for "pruning" exercises at the institutional level because they are not able to mount arguments in their own defence along the lines of "economic relevance".

New staffing policies

Newly exploitative staffing policies emanate from the "productive" rationality of the White Paper. This policy document will tend to exacerbate the present gap between tenured and untenured academic staff conditions and extend the lack of tenure into the ranks of senior lecturer and above. The arguments used to justify attacks on tenure are couched in terms of "flexibility", that is, institutions can respond more readily and efficiently to changes in demand for certain teaching/research services if they can

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employ more staff on a contract basis.

The White Paper also uses these same arguments to implement salary disparities between academics in the targeted areas and those in the non-targeted areas. It is claimed that high quality academic staff cannot be attracted to these nationally-important curriculum areas because the salaries are too low compared to outside industry salaries. The solution according to the White Paper, is to allow institutions to pay those targeted area academics at rates comparable to those outside, but from recurrent funds.

The main aim of this paper is to indicate how these key mechanisms will restructure the academic labour market. Such restructuring parallels the processes occurring in the wider labour market, where much full-time work has been reorganised into part-time, casual and contract work. Such reorganisation has effectively lowered overall labour costs in the past few years and has weakened union membership considerably. In the academic labour market the cost-reducing thrust has two key elements: the Federal Government's own fiscal crisis and the "new right" push for smaller, more efficient government.

The contradiction faced by the Dawkins position, however, is that whilst the Government wants to reduce expenditure on higher education, it also wants to be seen to be effectively utilising higher education for its economic growth potential.

The White Paper seeks to restructure the academic labour force so that both these objectives can be met, but in so doing it is re-establishing many of the system's inequities.

The process of restructuring

The notions of horizontal restructuring and vertical restructuring have been used to identify restructuring processes at the institutional level. At a national level amalgamations are being used as a restructuring mechanism.

Horizontal restructuring refers to the segmentation of disciplines/departments into the White Paper's "targeted" and "non-targeted" areas. The segmentation reflects, fairly closely, those notions of economically relevant knowledge and non-economically relevant knowledge which have gained dominance in Government thinking in recent times. It also reflects, to a great extent, current divisions in knowledge on a gender

Universities	Full-time teaching and research staff by grade, %				Tenured staff as proportion of total, %			
	1982	1984	1985	1986	1982	1984	1985	1986
Professor	10.4	10.2	9.5	9.7	99.0	98.6	98.3	98.4
A/Prof Reader	12.8	13.9	13.7	13.8	99.2	94.9	98.8	98.7
Senior Lecturer	34.5	35.6	33.9	34.3	98.6	96.9	96.3	96.0
Lecturer	24.1	23.1	22.9	23.3	79.0	74.5	66.4	66.3
Senior/Prin Tutor	6.8	6.1	5.7	5.3	44.7	48.4	38.5	35.9
Tutor	11.3	11.1	14.2	13.6	0.1	0.6	0.5	0.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	79.1	77.9	73.1	73.5
CAEs	Full-time academic staff by grade, %				Tenured staff as proportion of total, %			
	1982	1984	1985	1986	1982	1984	1985	1986
Above SL	10.0	9.9	10.2	10.0	97.5	97.6	96.5	97.5
SL I	16.7	16.7	16.5	15.3	98.5	98.5	98.9	98.2
SL II	7.4	7.5	7.5	8.1	94.9	95.9	95.8	95.4
L I	40.6	39.5	38.7	37.2	92.7	92.0	91.3	89.9
L II	12.9	12.6	15.1	16.8	62.6	55.1	59.5	58.7
L III	5.6	7.3	6.4	7.0	38.6	43.8	36.0	34.4
Below L	6.8	6.5	5.7	5.6	20.6	18.7	18.2	17.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	82.5	81.0	81.0	79.3

Source: CTEC Tertiary Education Statistics 1987, tables 48 and 49.

basis.

The term vertical restructuring is used to describe the growing division of the academic labour market into distinct primary and secondary markets. The primary market is characterised by jobs with permanency (tenure), career-structure, and on-labour benefits like superannuation long-service leave, overseas (and other special) leave. The secondary labour market is characterised by lack of permanency, in the form of short term full or part-time contracts, and casual work; lack of career structure, and the absence of on-labour benefits.

Both these forms of restructuring entail redefinitions of the notion of merit ("skill"), and it is intended in the paper to indicate how this redefining is taking place.

Vertical restructuring

At the present time, the majority of academic staff employed at the level of senior lecturer and above are in the primary labour market; whilst those employed as lecturers and below are, increasingly, in the secondary labour market. (see tables 1 & 2)

Table 1 indicates the total full-time teaching and research staff in universities and CAEs, 1982 to 1986, and the percentage of tenured staff. Whilst the CAE sector has a higher average proportion of full-time staff with tenure (in 1986, 79.3% compared with the university average of 73.5%), the figures for both sectors indicate that a much higher proportion of junior academic staff are untenured compared to their more senior colleagues.

	Tenured	Untenured	Total	Untenured
Professor	1057.96	22.22	1080.18	2.06%
Assoc Professor/Reader	1546.65	13.07	1559.72	0.84%
Senior Lecturer	3681.44	131.41	3812.85	3.45%
Sub-Total — Senior Lecturer and above	6286.05	166.70	6452.75	2.58%
Lecturer	1706.52	1049.21	2755.73	38.07%
Principal Tutor	58.30	10.96	69.26	15.82%
Senior Tutor etc	120.51	372.92	493.43	75.58%
Tutor etc	1.83	2101.80	2103.63	99.91%
Total — all staff	8173.22	3701.58	11874.80	31.17%
CAEs				
Above Senior Lecturer	913.00	45.57	958.57	4.75%
Senior Lecturer I	1522.50	66.43	1588.93	4.18%
Senior Lecturer II	717.00	69.72	786.72	8.86%
Sub-total — Senior Lecturer and above	3152.50	181.72	3334.22	5.45%
Lecturer I	3179.10	664.14	3843.24	17.28%
Lecturer II	1011.90	985.15	1997.05	49.33%
Lecturer III	231.00	688.99	919.99	74.89%
Other	96.42	1600.89	1697.31	94.32%
Total — all staff	7670.92	4120.89	11791.81	34.95%

Source: Department of Employment, Education and Training, institutional data, 1987. Unpublished.

Table 2 shows the proportion of staff that are untenured in 1987. In the university sector it can be seen that, on average, 2.58% of those at senior lecturer level and above are

untenured, whilst, on average, 31.17% of those employed at lecturer level and below are untenured. In the CAE sector an average 5.45% of Senior Lecturer and above are

untenured, with an average 34.9% of Lecturer 1 and below untenured.

The primary/secondary labour market divide in academia has a very clear gender dimension also: the majority of women academics are in the secondary labour market section. (see Table 3)

Table 3 % Full-time teaching and research staff employed by category		
	1985	1986
Universities		
Female staff at Lecturer and below	76.9	75.8
Male staff at Lecturer and below	35.2	34.3
CAEs		
Female staff at Lecturer II and below	49.5	51.4
Male staff at Lecturer II and below	19.7	21.4

Source: CTEC Tertiary Education Statistics 1987, from tables 48 and 49.

Table 3 indicates that in both the CAE and university sectors women are more likely to be employed in positions of Lecturer 11 (CAEs) and Lecturer (universities) and below. These categories have a much higher non-tenure rate than the more senior categories.

Whilst the division of the academic labour market into primary and secondary sectors has been taking place for some number of years now and mirrors the wider labour market processes, the thrust of the White Paper is to hasten the process and make it a firm characteristic of this labour market. (see Table 4)

Table 4 % of full-time teaching and research staff with tenure 1982-1986				
	1982	1984	1985	1986
Universities				
% with tenure total	79.1	77.9	73.1	73.5
% with tenure female	N/A	N/A	44.4	46.2
% with tenure male	N/A	N/A	79.6	79.9
CAEs				
% with tenure total	82.5	81.0	81.0	79.3
% with tenure female	N/A	N/A	69.8	67.6
% with tenure male	N/A	N/A	84.2	83.5

Source: CTEC Tertiary Education Statistics 1987, from tables 48 and 49.

An indication of the overall decrease in percentage of full-time staff with tenure in the 1982-86 period is clear from Table 4. Read in conjunction with Table 2, which gives the 1987 untenured figures, the pattern

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is obvious. It is difficult, however, to compare directly, the change in the percentage of untenured staff in 1987 with the earlier 1982 to 1986 figures because the CTEC statistics include total full-time staff only, whilst the DEET figures express the total numbers in Effective Full-time staff units, which include part-time staff as well.

The large discrepancy between the rate of tenure of women staff at universities compared with CAE's (46.2% compared with 67.6% in 1986) can be partly explained by the greater emphasis on research and publications criteria for promotion and/or chances of tenure at universities. In the absence of adequate structural support, many women university academics with families find it very difficult to match the research and publication records of their male colleagues.

The mainly vocational orientation of CAE courses, however, means that some women have had a better chance of getting their professional experience taken into consideration for promotion and/or tenure.

There is a wide variation in the different institutions' employment of untenured staff. Whilst the national average of effective full-time staff (universities) who are untenured is 31.17%, the mainland university with the lowest percentage of its full-time staff untenured is the University of Newcastle (in NSW) with 23.8% and the highest is James Cook (in Qld) with 39.9% of its full-time staff untenured (see table 5). Whilst one would expect that the older institutions would have a lower percentage of untenured

dividual institutional employment practices determine the overall percentage of untenured staff at each institution.

The White Paper encourages institutions to use "more flexible" staffing arrangements in a number of ways, and this may result in those institutions which currently employ less than the national average percentage of untenured staff increasing the use of such staff. The encouragement is both direct and indirect. Direct in the sense that the overall short-fall of recurrent funds (a fall of 8% per student in real terms since the 1970s)² puts pressure on institutions to find ways of reducing costs. Indirect pressure arises from other measures that the White Paper takes to improve shortages of certain staff and research funds.

The White Paper allows institutions to pay above-award rates to attract staff into certain disciplines where shortages are occurring (eg accountancy) which puts pressure on their recurrent funding because this is the source it must come from. A number of institutions will increase their usage of part-time and casual staff as a way of balancing their wages bill. Another source of pressure is the new competitive bidding system for research funding. This could encourage more institutions to allow the employment of even higher proportions of casual teaching staff to free current staff from more of their teaching responsibilities so that they would be in a position to bid against other institutions for research funds.

The full-time tenured employment statistics are not the only measure of how this Labour Market is being restructured. Part-time and casual employment are another dimension of the process. Part-time and casual classification varies from institution to institution. Whilst part-time academics are eligible for sick-leave and pro-rata holiday entitlements, casual workers are not, but have a pay loading which theoretically takes these entitlements into account. Neither part-timers nor casuals are eligible for leave entitlements (special, long-service, etc), nor do they have access to superannuation schemes (with the exception of a handful of permanent part-time staff). Many institutions employ casual academics to teach more hours than some of their tenured full-time staff teach, often without letting such staff know of the union agreed maximum ceiling of hours. This area of employment is one of the most exploited in many institutions.

There are a number of problems associated with documenting a clear trend in

Table 5 % Effective full-time staff (excluding research only) untenured, by institution, 1987	
Institution	% untenured
Macquarie	26.6
Uni of NSW	24.7
Uni of Newcastle	23.8
Uni of Wollongong	34.8
Uni of New England	27.5
Uni of Sydney	36.3
NSW average	29.8
Deakin	27.1
La Trobe	32.2
Monash	33.9
Uni of Melbourne	37.2
Vic average	34.2
Griffith	29.9
James Cook	39.9
Uni of Qld	35.0
Qld average	35.1
Murdoch	28.0
Uni of WA	33.9
WA average	32.4
Flinders	24.1
Uni of Adelaide	28.5
SA average	27.1
Uni of Tasmania	22.3
ANU	24.4
National average —	
Universities	31.17
CAEs	34.90

Source: DEET Institutional Data 1987 (as yet unpublished) from Effective Full-time Staff Statistics.

the use of casual and part-time staff however. The majority of institutions do not collect information on the employment of casual academic staff. Nor do they usually record the gender division of the part-time staff statistics that they do collect. In the case of the part-time figures, they are officially expressed in full-time equivalent units, so the actual number of people who make up the equivalent full-time positions is not formally indicated. This of course hides the fragmented nature of this section of the secondary labour market. Whilst most people who work in the academic labour market are aware that women form the majority of part-time academic staff, the lack of systematic documentation makes definitive claims impossible. A South Australian study of part-time employment in the general workforce indicates that a great proportion (85% of those part-time surveyed) of part-time workers are women and that 77% of the part-time work done is on a casual basis.³ On some university and college campuses the pattern may be fairly similar to this general workforce pattern. Certainly the statistics for NSW CAEs indicates that the majority (68.7%) of part-time academic staff below lecturer 11 level are women.⁴

Table 6						
Full-time equivalent staff and part-time staff expressed in equivalent full-time units in universities and CAEs 1975, 1980 and 1985						
	1975		1980		1985	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Universities						
Full-time	11075	100.0	11782	100.0	11624	100.0
Part-time	1237	11.2	1168	9.9	1206	10.4
CAEs						
Full-time	8975	100.0	10304	100.0	11039	100.0
Part-time	1010	11.3	1317	12.8	1639	14.8

Source: CTEC Review of Efficiency and Effectiveness in Higher Education, 1986, from appendix 7 and 8.

Table 6 gives an indication of the use of part-time staff in both universities and CAEs. It also shows that the percentage of part-time to full-time staff in the university sector marginally declined over the ten year period, whereas the percentage part-time to full-time staff in the CAE sector increased significantly. Without the availability of casual employment statistics there is no way of knowing whether the university sector's decrease in percentage part-time employment over the period is in fact offset by increasing utilisation of casual academic staff.

The fiscal squeeze on institutions forced by Federal government funding cutbacks has often resulted in those bodies looking to cheaper sources of labour. Short-term contracts (casual, part-time or full-time) provide so-called flexibility and cheapness. On-labour costs like long-service and overseas (and other special) leave, and superannuation are cut by having contract workers.⁵ Short-term contracts allow institutions to meet short-falls in the supply of labour without committing on-going salary costs to those particular areas experiencing the shortage. The same is true for areas where demand for staff may decline over time: short-term contracts allow the oversupply to be dealt with by not renewing contracts. The White Paper encourages this use of short-term contract labour . . .

*The engagement of staff under casual or hourly-paid arrangements or on fractional appointments is an essential element in the flexible use of staffing resources and in attracting staff who would not otherwise be available on a full-time basis. The June 1988 settlement preserves this important element of staffing flexibility.*⁶

But what counts as "flexibility" to institutions, produces job insecurity and labour force docility in those contracted workers. Fear of not being seen as a serious candidate for re-application for the same position, or for consideration when a tenured position comes up (rare these days!), keeps a great number of contract academics from being articulate and active on campuses against what they perceive as the injustices of the

system. Those contract academics who make up what is called the secondary labour market are literally the reserve army of academia. They provide a reserve supply (of teaching and certain research skills) for the primary market, and keep the overall teaching/research profile of each institution functioning, but without the personal benefits and structural recognition accorded those in the primary labour market. When tutorships were more akin to an academic apprenticeship, the teaching/administrative load was adjusted, as was the pay, to take the expected study for a higher degree into account. Over the past ten or so years the apprenticeship/tutorship relationship has been torn asunder, and increasingly, casual and part-time academics in particular acquire the qualifications needed in academia at their own expense. So there is a privatising of some of the costs of academic training; they are moved from the sphere of the institution (where they were part of the apprenticeship package) to the personal/family sphere.

The expansion of academic contract work has effectively weakened the potential strength of the academic unions. The recent (June 1988) 4% pay increase for academics was accompanied by some fairly serious deteriorations in work conditions, one of which included the push for institutions to increase the proportion of untenured senior lecturers up to 10% of that category employed. This extends the growth of the secondary labour market up into the higher ranks of academic employment, and means the career structure of the academic labour market will in the future effectively begin at senior lecturer level.

It is important to note the differing strengths of the mechanisms utilised by the White Paper in relation to "non-continuing" employment at senior and junior levels. In the case of junior levels the Government . . . "suggests that, in light of the important changes to the terms of continuing employment now agreed, institutions may wish to review the extent of non-continuing employment load at these levels."⁷ Whereas, at senior levels . . . "it agreed that over the

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next two years each institution *should* double the proportion of non-continuing employment load at senior lecturer level and above.⁸ Thus there is really no strong mechanism that forces institutions to address the imbalance of non-continuing employment at junior levels, unless individual institutions increase their senior untenured proportion to above 10%, in which case there has to be a compensatory decrease in non-tenure at lecturer level.

The push to increase the numbers of untenured senior lecturers (and above) opens the possibilities for institutions to employ, at senior staff level, outside business/industry persons, probably on a secondment basis. This permits the forging of more direct business/institutional links that the business groups and government have been encouraging via other methods. In the faculties/disciplines where this happens one will get a qualitatively different approach to teaching and changes in the social relationships in which knowledge is constructed, compared to those faculties/disciplines which will have few or no direct business links of this nature.

Another feature of the primary/secondary labour market split is the growing status gap between research and teaching. The White Paper's specific targeting of some of the pure and applied sciences for further concentration of research effort will strengthen research in those areas because of the market-driven nature of most of the funding sources. Those in the primary labour market do most of the institutionally-recognised research and a certain proportion of the teaching, and those in the secondary labour market carry out a great proportion of the teaching. The White Paper's emphasis on certain types of research, and the greater importance placed on research activities over teaching activities by the tone of its content will act to exacerbate the disparities between the primary and secondary labour markets.

Since the 1960s with the movement of more women into academic jobs research has come to be seen more as the "male" domain. There are certain structural realities of academic work which make it appear that women are more "committed" to teaching — (a) they do a great bulk of the teaching because they are in the majority of those employed at tutor and lecturer level; (b) they are not usually involved in consultancy work, and therefore not in a position to reorganise their work to pass down teaching loads to junior staff members. Yeatman⁹

claims that . . . "a good deal of consultancy work is predicated on patterns of availability and time use which depend on freedom from domestic and primary parenting responsibilities"; (c) they are not often recipients of large outside research grants, so can't justify work load reorganisation. Teaching is accorded lower status in the White Paper — there is not much mention of the role or nature of teaching in it, although the restructuring of research and funding bases will obviously have a direct effect on teaching.

Despite efforts on some campuses to utilise Equal Employment Opportunity principles, the lower status of teaching has been related to the way in which academic merit ("skill") for promotional purposes has been defined in this labour market.

Particularly in these difficult economic times there is an active reconstruction of the notion of "skill" which ensures the preservation of certain jobs in the primary labour market for those groups which already hold power. In academia the ability to carry out certain types of research (and get publication in certain types of journals, etc) is part and parcel of this redefinition of skill.

Phillips and Taylor¹⁰ point to the gender dimension of this type of reconstruction. They claim that . . . "the equations — men/skilled, women/unskilled — are so powerful that the identification of a particular job with women ensured that the skill content of the work would be down graded. It is the sex of those who do the work, rather than its content, which leads to its identification as skilled or unskilled". Game and Pringles¹¹ study indicated that such a process does occur. If what these writers say is true, it gives us a valuable insight into the long process of the devaluation of teaching that has occurred since women entered academia in greater numbers.

The process of deskilling has been taking place for some time now, via the creation of more contract teaching positions. Casual and part-time teachers are structurally kept out of key research areas, so they can't develop collaborative (or sometimes even independent) research skills, and therefore research-based teaching. When the teaching/research nexus is broken by the proliferation of contract teaching-only positions, you are effectively deskilling those carrying out the teaching-only services.

The White Paper actively encourages a construction of "skill" which ensures that those with research skills and publication records, in the targeted areas especially, maintain their position in the primary labour market. An oversupply of graduates with "teaching only" qualifications, that is, those without access to research funds under the new competitive bidding arrangements, will rapidly develop. Such an oversupply will keep salaries low and help maintain the short-term contract nature of the secondary labour market, because unemployment

graduates are not in a position to shun part-time and casual work offerings, given the nature of the wider labour market.

Even within the primary academic labour market there will develop two distinct categories of workers on a pay differential or effective income basis. By not penalising institutions for paying above-award rates (as was the case in the past) and by encouraging them to offer extra non-salary remuneration packages to attract staff to those areas short of "high quality staff"¹² the White Paper will, in effect, create two categories of primary labour market academics. One group, in the nationally-targeted areas, will begin to demand above-award rates (or the non-salary equivalent) to match the recently-attracted members' of staff salaries. Institutions will not be able to ignore such demands if they wish to keep staff in their "high profile" areas. The funding for such salaries must come from the institution's current budget, which puts pressure on them to cut costs elsewhere.

The second group of academics will be those, mainly in the non-targeted areas, left on award rates because they will not be able to mount arguments about the need to compete with outside bodies for staff. Because the targeted areas have a predominance of male academics, the effective pay differentials will have a strong gender dimension as well.

Some of the vertical restructuring processes are said to increase productivity, but it is important to analyse the changes in the social relations of the learning/teaching dynamic to get a more accurate picture of this so called input/output relationship. The proliferation of part-time and casual teaching staff in some institutions has altered the teacher/student relationship. Full-time staff have a responsibility to give students consultation time (and good teachers do this) but part-time and casual staff are not paid to do this, nor do they usually have the facilities to do it. They usually have a fairly peripheral relationship to the institution and the students — a relationship not easily conducive to quality in terms of teacher/student interaction.

Bigger class sizes or less face-to-face contact hours privatises learning, that is, such practices push more learning into the private sphere. They shift the site of learning from the formal institutional sphere to the students' informal and personal sphere, which can have serious repercussions for students whose private sphere doesn't easily lend itself to a "study" culture. Federal Government cutbacks also push the costs of learning resources from the institutional sphere to the individual sphere, as less available class material and fewer library resources mean students and staff are forced to purchase individual copies of resource materials.

Vertical restructuring results in those with

the least power in the tertiary education labour market being forced to share a disproportionate share of the increased monetary, social and personal costs of the increased teaching loads, reduced resources/facilities, diminishing research time and general research funding availability.

Horizontal restructuring

The White Paper esteems certain fields of knowledge, and, the key to understanding why certain areas of knowledge that are taught and constructed in academia have been targeted as more important is the notion of "skill". As indicated in the previous discussion of vertical restructuring, a reconstruction of the concept has been taking place, in that instance to facilitate the division of certain jobs into primary and secondary labour market jobs. In the context of horizontal restructuring the notion of "skill" is being redefined along technocratic lines to justify divisions into economically relevant knowledge and non-economically relevant knowledge. Economically relevant knowledge is being redefined as that which consolidates in human capital form those skills, attitudes and that knowledge content which more directly serves the needs of economic growth. Thus economically relevant knowledge is that which can readily be embodied in a specific type of graduate (end-product). Academics and others (especially from the business sector) who can construct and reproduce this economically relevant knowledge in our higher education institutions are being defined as "skilled". Those whose teaching and research lies in the humanities and more general social sciences are being redefined as less "skilled" because their skills, attitudes and the content of their knowledge area are not seen to be economically relevant.

The White Paper targeting of specific knowledge areas for fostering and preferential treatment has an important gender dimension as well. The majority of male students and male primary labour market academics are attached to those faculty/discipline areas targeted in the White Paper. Conversely, the majority of female students and female primary labour market academics are attached to the non-targeted areas.

The gender division of students enrolled in the various disciplines/schools is easily accessible. However statistics on the gender division of tenured and untenured staff in particular disciplines/schools has never been collected in a consistent or accessible form, although such information will become more accessible under the new DEET requirements for collection of institutional data.

Tables 7 and 8 indicate the proportion of tenured staff in each of the schools at Macquarie University in 1988. Table 7 shows quite clearly that the number of tenured

Table 7
Macquarie University full-time and fractional full-time tenured teaching and research and tenured 'other' staff 1988

School	Tenured teachers		Tenured 'other'		Total staff (includ. unten.)
	Female	Male	Female	Male	
Beh. Science	21.0	26.0	11.3	9.0	110.17
Bio. Sc.	5.0	23.0	18.8	20.0	98.01
Chem.	—	12.5	4.0	13.0	39.43
Ear. Sc.	3.0	37.0	13.1	17.0	82.35
Econ/Fin.	5.0	57.0	10.7	3.0	103.59
Educ.	8.0	25.0	14.5	6.0	90.47
Eng/Lin	13.0	21.0	7.0	8.0	69.59
H.P. Pol.	10.0	44.0	11.0	—	80.00
Math/Phy/Com.	1.0	35.0	5.0	17.0	82.38
Mod. Lang.	7.0	15.0	3.45	1.0	41.20
Law	5.0	17.0	5.0	—	35.00
Env/Urb.	—	3.5	1.3	—	9.37
Grad. Sch. Man.	—	5.0	5.0	—	10.25
Tot. Uni.	78.0	321.0	110.15	94.0	851.81

Source: Macquarie University Registrar's Office, October 1988.

Table 8
% of Macquarie University staff with tenure in selected schools* by gender 1988

School	% of full-time and full-time fractional teaching and research staff tenured	
	Female	Male
Bio. Sc.	5.1	23.4
Chem.	—	31.7
Econ/Fin.	4.8	55.0
Math/Phy/Com.	1.2	42.5

*Schools selected as those most closely fitting the White Paper's targeted areas, although probably only the biotechnology section of the Biol. Sciences School meets the White Paper criteria.

Source: Macquarie University Registrar's Office, October 1988.

women in the schools likely to contain the White Paper's targeted knowledge areas is very low, whilst the numbers of tenured males in those schools is significantly higher.

Table 8 indicates the actual percentage of male and female primary labour market academics in those schools at Macquarie University which are the likely White Paper target areas.

There are a number of important social and historical reasons why there are so few tenured female academics in these areas at Macquarie and elsewhere, the most crucial of which is the nature of the knowledge content itself and the social relations in which it is produced and reproduced. A plethora of feminist research in the past decade has raised very important epistemological questions about the nature of the physical sciences and some of the social sciences, some of which more readily explains why female students and academics become locked out of those areas of study and work. Most of the White Paper's targeted areas are those which contain predominantly "masculinist" values¹³

and without reform of these knowledge bases, the project of "girls into Science and Maths" (one of the few equity mechanisms addressed in the White Paper) is doomed to failure.

The new Australian Research Council (ARC) funding mechanism and the "profiles" mechanism will only exacerbate the current imbalance in the research funding pattern as far as the social science/humanities areas and the majority of women's studies research is concerned. As Lindsay and Neumann¹⁴ point out, less than 30% of research effort is carried out in areas other than the sciences already. An increasing proportion of institutions recurrent funding will be retained in the hands of the ARC for distribution on an economically-relevant basis. This means that all institutions will face a short-fall of recurrent funds and will have to "prune" and/or "restructure" their teaching and research activities if they don't win back the equivalent (or more) funding in the competitive bidding process that the construction of "profiles" represents. Even if some institutions do win back equivalent

funding for that lost via the new recurrent funding arrangements, it will go to those areas which have "concentrated their effort" because the incentive mechanisms in the White Paper will undermine any individual institution's attempts to act democratically, say by saving all of their current pattern of offerings, in their own strategic planning . . .

*"A substantial part of institutional research provision will continue to be funded through operating grants which will be allocated on the basis of an educational profile agreed between the Commonwealth and the institution. In the longer term, research performance, along with other aspects of educational performance, will be taken into consideration in funding higher education institutions. The government expects institutions to allocate research funding provided through operating grants on the basis of a research management plan, in which excellence and concentration of resources to best effect must be a high priority."*¹⁵

There is a crucial differentiation made between the notions of scholarship and research in the White Paper which was not even alluded to in the earlier discussion paper (The Green Paper). This differentiation could be interpreted as a way of defending some of the criticisms that the Green Paper evoked relating to the possible demise of certain types of social science and humanities research. The White Paper is at pains to describe the differences between scholarship and research, in a way which exemplifies a natural science model of research as "true research". Thus the White Paper defines research to mean . . . "systematic and rigorous investigation aimed at the discovery of previously unknown phenomena, the development of explanatory theory and its application to new situations or problems, and the construction of original works of significant intellectual merit." Whereas scholarship is said to refer to . . . "the analysis and interpretation of existing knowledge aimed at improving, through teaching or by other means of communication the depth of human understanding."¹⁶

What the majority of researchers in the social sciences and humanities areas do is being defined as scholarship rather than as research, because the model of research activity being adopted emanates from, amongst other sources, the very influential Australian Science and Technology Council (ASTEC) reports of recent times.¹⁷ This model favours the natural science methodology and reasserts notions about knowledge which a great number of people in the social sciences and humanities have moved away from more recently, in the light of important findings from a wide spectrum of research. Any research activity which doesn't fit the model will be redefined as scholarship, and becomes part of every

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academic's "normal" load. A redefinition of social science/humanities research as scholarship is not only a way of legitimating cutbacks to research in these areas but also represents the two important processes of privatising research effort and deskilling academic staff in the economically non-relevant areas. By redefining most social science/humanities research as scholarship and thus part of their normal activity, the White Paper will effectively push the research component of this work into academics' unpaid time if research funding is not forthcoming for this group. It also downgrades such research skills, not just because it uses different terminology to describe the work process involved, but mainly because it redefines it out of the research funding pool.

Junor¹⁸ claims that . . .

"The reality for people working in teacher education, and most areas of the arts, social sciences and humanities is that none of either the growth money nor the research money will come back to them. People working in these areas face the consolidated process, and at best a share in the slight increase built into the base operating grant."

Managerial competencies

There is an important added dimension to the redefinitions of "skill" that are taking place. Managerial competence is being highlighted as one of the crucial elements of "productivity" and "efficiency" enhancement . . . "The Government's restructuring of the higher education system will create an environment that fosters and rewards improved management practices" and . . . "Staff development to enhance sound management practice is as critical as staff development to improve institutional scholarship, teaching and research."¹⁹

Those individuals who provide evidence of their managerial capabilities and those faculties/departments which implement managerial-related strategies are being defined as having the skills necessary to take tertiary education into its new phase of direct servicing of the needs of the economy. Managerial skills are seen to be important for those already in, or those aspiring to, the primary labour market. At department/faculty level they are important in managing research in a way which enhances the profile of that department/faculty and at institutional level important in enhancing the overall profile of the institution. This new

"skill" is being constructed in a way which serves the needs of both the horizontal and vertical restructuring processes. It is designed to reassert technocratic notions of efficiency and productivity which contain very limited understandings of teaching/learning processes and the contexts in which critical knowledge is constructed. The notions depend on highly qualifiable facts, processes and outcomes. Certainly the horizontal restructuring process requires an ability to prune and co-ordinate research and teaching activities in the way which the profile mechanism dictates. Blackmore and Kenway²⁰ claim that corporate management is a misnomer for the re-establishment of paternalistic management techniques. In view of the way in which most of the recent amalgamation "negotiations" between institutions have been taking place this claim can be vindicated. The more democratic representation processes which had been won on some campuses by the mid 1980s have been ignored in many cases by administrations in their quest for what they perceive as institutional survival. Academic and general staff have been kept as much in the dark about possible mergers involving their own campuses (or parts thereof) as have the general public.

Amalgamations

The third force for restructuring, at a national level, is the amalgamation push. From 1990 agreed profile funding arrangements will operate only for those institutions which have joined the unified national system. The nature of this restructuring mechanism makes it more difficult to predict its outcomes than those of the other two restructuring processes. Whilst the White Paper makes fairly explicit the patterns of growth for certain knowledge bases and types of academics on a national basis, it leaves the details of amalgamations up to the individual negotiators concerned. The implications of horizontal and vertical restructuring may be fairly accurately predicted by anyone with an understanding of the particular institution in question, but the outcomes from such processes once a "consolidation" of any number of institutions has taken place are less easily gauged.

If the added dimension of amalgamation restructuring was not on the agenda for institutions, the profile mechanism would have been a more clear-cut one. On its own, it demands the identification of those research and teaching activities seen as the strengths of the institution (which groups have the power to define institutional strengths?). The next step is a concentration of funding and publicity effort to get all manner of Commonwealth and outside funding for those areas. Individual institutions with profiles which closely match the White Paper targeted areas would be more likely to obtain a lion's share of the ARC and outside corporate funding than those institutions whose

profiles did not directly reflect the White Paper priorities. So the pressure would be on the latter group of institutions to develop profiles more likely to attract the market-driven funding, which of course means a building up of or concentration on those areas in which they may not previously have had recognised "strengths". The message in the White Paper about profiles is twofold, on the one hand it pushes for a rationalisation of individual institutional effort for the sake of "efficiency" and "productivity", and on the other it values (via its funding mechanisms) that effort which will directly serve economic growth. With amalgamations firmly on the agenda, however, the development of profiles becomes somewhat clouded.

Profile development and agreement with the Commonwealth Government needs to be in place before the commencement of the 1989-91 triennium. Yet amalgamation proposals and negotiations are still continuing, with very few definite decisions having been taken by the majority of institutions. How clear profiles can have been agreed to by the end of the 1988 funding period is difficult to ascertain. The White Paper agenda for institutions in this regard is not only contradictory but cruel in its effects on staff, particularly academic staff, and administrators, and especially those in the smaller or less prestigious institutions which will have the "eyes" picked out of their many varied parts, with the remainder possibly left to "wither on the vine".

Amalgamations will have very different effects on each of those institutions which "choose" to become part of the national unified system, depending on whether they are small or large, regional or city-based. Large, high-status institutions are in a better position to choose which institutions or faculties/disciplines they want to be associated with. Amalgamations may take place on their terms, where they pick the "eyes" out of other smaller or less prestigious institutions in order to further enhance their own profile. Small, High-status institutions can do the same, although to a lesser extent if the magic threshold number of Equivalent Full Time Student Units (EFTSU) is a problem.

Lower-status institutions may be forced to accept whatever type of amalgamation available, and there will be a lot of "left-over" situations which may force smaller, less prestigious institutions to come together

without any coherent and Commonwealth approved profile. This may mean they will have research funding difficulties and be funded as teaching-only institutions — a situation which the White Paper claims should only happen to those institutions which "choose" to remain outside the national unified system.

Conclusion

The sort of skill redefinitions that are being utilised to segment academics vertically and horizontally in any one particular institution will be used to sift and sort the newly consolidated academic labour force in the restructured institutions that emanate from the amalgamation thrust.

These redefinitions are being shaped, in part, by academics themselves, especially by some of those already in the primary labour market section of the White Paper targeted areas. Some of these academics have had much influence in the broader economic thinking behind the White Paper via their ideological support of or open association with groups like the Economic Planning Advisory Council, the Australian Science and Technology Council, the Confederation of Australian Industry and the Business Council of Australia.

Such academics are already in positions of power and see their own academic needs and those of their institution as fairly synonymous with the White Paper's defined needs of the economy. Such an alliance of powerful class and patriarchal forces will prove very difficult to counter by those in academia who want to continue the fight for more democratic processes within higher education.

But counter it we must, because the alliance will never be complete and without its contradictions. The economic thinking that informs the White Paper is contradictory and is flawed in one of its key assumptions. This assumption, that economic growth will emanate from increases in specific forms of human capital (as developed in the "targeted areas") will be proven economically incorrect further down the track, but it is important to debate and discuss publicly its ideological underpinnings now.

There are crucial alliances that we can form to preserve the critical spaces that broad liberal notions of education provide. The teaching and research cultures that develop in response to the need to maintain

critical perspectives frameworks must be linked and strengthened at this particular point in time.

Acknowledgements: Thanks go to Jan O'Leary, Research assistant at Macquarie University, for a great proportion of the statistical information and Laurie Josephs in the Registrar's Office at Macquarie University.

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