

normlessness seems inevitable. What then will emerge is difficult to say, but unless academics take charge of the agenda the result will most certainly not be to their liking.

Prospects

Despite the rapid changes in the system, the relative loss of salary and the decline in working conditions, academics on the whole remain satisfied with their work (Harman and Wood 1990). For the moment, even though they have been described as dispirited, fragmented, and devalued, academics remain dedicated. But job satisfaction and morale are not the same thing. Satisfaction with work bears on an individual's sense of personal well-being, while morale refers to the relationship with the organisation. Sooner or later, when work practices change to the point that the job applied for is no longer recognisable, low morale starts to impinge on the daily rewards of the work, especially when the primary motivation is the work itself.

The challenge for academics and academic leaders is to match individual preferences in work with institutional goals such that both are enhanced. Perhaps it is time to reassess the appropriateness for all academics of the 'dominant fiction' of the academic as the cosmopolitan research scientist, and introduce - not revive - a broader image of scholar for the profession (Rice 1992). The first step to overcoming the growing mismatch between what academics do best and perhaps unrealistic expectations is to redefine scholarship to acknowledge and legitimate the diversity of academics and institutions in the system. The alternative outcome - the one that resulted from middle level universities in the US imitating the research universities - is an 'undistinguished comprehensiveness' (Ruscio 1987). This can apply to individual academics as well as to institutions.

Notes

1 Despite the centrality of academic work to the operation of higher education, the academic life in Australia has been largely unexamined. We tend to rely on studies from overseas to find what makes academics work. The local research has for the most part focused on the values of academics rather than their practices, and particularly their preferences for research and teaching. This paper is partly based on a study of the work practices of 40 academics to be reported elsewhere.

2 For an analysis of the effects of institutional size see: Peter Blau, *The organisation of academic work*, New York: John Wiley.

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Academic perceptions of their roles pre and post the new higher education policy

Linda Hort and Harry Oxley

University of Canberra

During the first semester of 1987, while the new Higher Education Policy Paper was still a gleam in some politicians eye, we sent out almost 1500 questionnaires to a sample of Australian academics from 25 higher education institutions, large and small universities and large and small colleges of advanced education (CAEs). The aim of our research was to determine academics' perceptions of their roles and their careers, and look for sectoral and size differences in those things (Oxley and Hort, 1987; Hort and Oxley, 1989). However, we were also sitting on a gold mine of information. Quite by chance we had an enormous amount of data on academics in institutions just before the release of the new policy on higher education, the abolition of the binary divide, and the commencement of a series of institutional amalgamations.

At the end of the first semester in this year we repeated part of our study. We say part because this second survey was a small one, and only two thirds of the proportion who responded to the first one completed and returned its questionnaires. While the results of our recent survey, then, certainly need to be regarded with caution, we do not believe that we have here the phenomenon of 'garbage in, garbage out'. Just as gardeners say 'a weed' is not a special kind of plant but any plant allowed to grow in the wrong place, so is 'garbage' not a particular kind of data but data allowed to masquerade as that which it is not. Here we are not masquerading. What we present is suggestive. Insofar as most of it fits a clear pattern, and that pattern would probably be fairly widely suspected without benefit of surveys, it is strongly suggestive. It does not, however, settle matters once and for all with any 'scientific certainty'.

Method

Questionnaire

The questionnaire that we used in 1987 was reprinted and sent out again this year. It contained 20 questions. These included five questions on role orientation and 7 questions on job satisfaction, as well as "background" questions.

Sample

Samples in both 1987 and 1992 were drawn from institutional staff lists. The first was drawn so as to get sufficient representation from 2 by 2 'sectors'; large universities, small universities, large CAEs ('Institutes of Technology') and small CAEs. This second one aimed at the same balance, because we were interested in the presence or absence and (if present) nature of changes in these 'sectors' under their new names. But these new sectorially-denying names are often accompanied by sectorially-confusing handbook staff lists. We picked our sector-representatives from where the staff-lists were clear. We did not attempt to sample from all the particular institutions which we sampled before but used a smaller number of institutions. This was partly because we want to use the greater number of them again for another study and do not want to over-survey; but it was mostly for relative ease in a work-context of constant rush. The problem with this way is that (a) not only sectors but individual institutions differ in the amount of satisfaction they offer their staff, (b) we realised after we had sent the questionnaires out that one of the institutions we had picked had come up in the earlier survey as more unhappy than the rest, so that, if its miseries have stayed the same over the interim

period, this may have made this particular sub-sector as a whole appear more unhappy than it more generally is.

The 1987 and 1992 samples were both proportionally stratified by institution type (prior to 1988) and by faculty (Arts, Science, and the "professions" - Commerce, Law and Economics).

Procedure

The survey was mailed, with a reply paid envelope and covering letter to all selected academics during the mid first semester break in 1992. Only a single mailing was used.

Results

At the time of this analysis a total of 100 completed questionnaires have been returned. To meet deadlines it has been necessary to truncate the sample returning, and to analyse those questionnaires we have at this time. Questionnaires continue to be returned but have not been included in our analysis. Because of this constraint the response rate is unfortunately low at 34%.

The hypothesis

Dawkins restructured higher education. But he restructured it at a time already well-begun of changes afflicting higher education across the whole of the older English-speaking part of an economically depressed Western world, where many things were falling apart (see also Dummett, 1992). Given this general trend towards what used to be the CAE world, we expected the bulk of CAEs to continue much as before whatever name they got, with an addition of 'research' as an additional management imposition upon staff duties as a possibility. Otherwise, we expected the differences between the original 'universities' and these CAEs to be much the same today regardless of new names.

The only places we saw real change as a possibility were the larger 'Central Institutes of Technology', which had the size and the special expertise - and parallels in highly respected American institutions - and which were beginning to seek and get the label 'university' before Dawkins changes.

Thus we expected to find certain tendencies which would probably have occurred if Dawkins had never existed. These tendencies we expected to involve a general trend towards acceptance of pedagogy as the prime university duty, an increasing bureaucratisation, and a general lessening of work satisfaction.

Demographics

The demographics of contemporary higher education are better covered by studies of figures already present in the institutions' personnel offices if they are not already in official statistics. But, for analyses of more complexity than we need (or feel able to do from the small 1992 sample) to do here, we asked such questions and give our answers. They have nothing to do with what Dawkins would no doubt have seen as 'restructuring' and we have come to see as mere 're-naming', and are all as were to be expected.

As regards to time served in the institutions, the original universities (especially the smaller ones) show an increase in the more recently employed; this is to be expected from staff increases and needs to replace retiring academics. Small universities have acquired a lot of new blood with expansions and turnover. The ex-CAEs have

always had a fairly high proportion of short-termers and this has not gone up. Older universities have a higher proportion of long-timers, as is perhaps to be expected for lack of better jobs elsewhere, and the ex-CAEs have far larger numbers in this category simply because (in that same context) they have themselves grown older.

Individuals have grown older in all of the sub-sectors, most notably in the ex-CAEs. Even with the small size of the second sample, the aging of academic staff which everyone knows about from attending conferences brought up a statistical significance less than 0.001 on a two-tailed chi-square test.

Qualifications in the sub-sectors may be harder to obtain, and so we give our findings on these. Here we have grouped our last two categories of doctoral degrees and equivalent-effort/ability professional qualifications and have lumped up the pro-academically infinitesimal 'diploma' category with the next to give us three; 'Bachelors', 'Masters' and 'Higher'. The proportional comparisons in percentage terms are as follows on Table 1:

Table 1: Qualifications institutional types as per old sub-sectors: Samples compared						
	Bachelor's degree		Master's degree		Higher degree	
	1987 samp	1992 samp	1987 samp	1992 samp	1987 samp	1992 samp
Big unis.	4.6	7.4	15.5	14.8	79.9	77.8
Small unis.	8.0	11.8	13.3	32.4	78.7	55.8
Big coll.	10.8	24.0	47.2	40.0	42.1	36.0
Small coll.	19.5	14.3	51.3	71.4	29.3	14.0

The levels of qualifications seem to have gone down consistently across all the sectors. While this may be because of the growth of non-traditional areas of teaching where doctoral degrees are uncommon - like accounting and nursing - and the proportional sampling may have increased the number from these professions responding, the result still seems strange, and worth following up with figures obtained from a larger sample. But still today's places to get a job on the strength of a Master's degree are surely the -Dawkins Universities which used to be called Colleges of Advanced Education; especially the smaller ones.

Orientations

In the first question on the survey we used statements with a Likert scale to ask about work-orientations. The questions were grouped as four separate dimensions (sub-scales) by adding from two to four of these in each (for details on the scale construction and the statistical analysis of them see Hort and Oxley 1989). All the Likert scales on work-orientation (or work-satisfaction) started from 1 for 'strongly agree' (or for 'very satisfied') down to 6 for the opposite. Thus in these tables as for placements in horse races it is 'small' that is beautiful, representing the higher position on the measure of a particular orientation (or on satisfaction) with the tilting-point at 3.5.

Our four dimensions or sub-scales for work orientation, as in the earlier study, are 'teacher', 'researcher', 'local' and 'cosmopolitan'. This last was put in because of earlier work on academics in California which made much of the difference between those committed to a particular place of work and those expecting to follow their work from place to different place. This differentiated those who saw themselves more in terms of an organisation or more in terms of an occupation. The American study also found 'local cosmopolitans' who wished to work at the best institution for their research (mostly) but saw

themselves as being already there. Not surprisingly there are relatively few of these in the vast bulk of tertiary institutions in any country. As before, averaging across the sectors produce small differences, but they are consistent across the two studies and telling.

Table 2: Occupational orientations on four dimensions: Samples compared for mean scores					
	1987 Mean (sd)	1992 Mean (sd)		1987 Mean (sd)	1992 Mean (sd)
Teacher			Local		
Big unis.	3.18 (1.21)	3.14 (1.19)	Big unis.	4.19 (1.16)	4.03 (1.41)
Small unis.	3.11 (1.19)	3.21 (1.11)	Small unis.	4.00 (1.16)	3.79 (1.30)
Big coll.	2.38 (0.92)	2.60 (0.87)	Big colls.	3.90 (1.15)	3.78 (0.97)
Small coll	2.32 (0.89)	2.86 (1.31)	Small colls	3.75 (1.25)	4.07 (0.98)
Researcher			Cosmopolitan		
Big unis.	2.46 (0.90)	2.48 (1.05)	Big unis.	1.98 (0.89)	1.83 (0.78)
Small unis.	2.48 (0.94)	2.76 (0.86)	Small unis.	1.92 (0.83)	1.82 (0.78)
Big coll.	3.25 (1.10)	3.16 (0.90)	Big coll.	2.41 (1.00)	2.30 (0.89)
Small coll.	3.51 (1.00)	3.43 (0.98)	Small coll.	2.62 (1.01)	2.57 (1.33)

Here is the table:

What these figures mostly suggest is that differences indeed remain much as before. The second small sample gives responses to these items that suggest that the new system may involve the CAEs becoming a little less teaching-oriented without becoming much more research oriented in parallel. On the other hand the small universities suggest that their working academics may be going down on both together. Indeed the latter's drop on research provided one of those statistical significances which such exploratory exercises throw up in the process of averaging - at 0.10 level, with the drop in teacher-orientation in the CAEs provided the other two, at nearly 0.10 and <.05; we repeat 'for what it is worth', but when figures surprise us a little, we feel (we had expected all sectors except maybe the Institutes of Technology to have become more pedagogical together) we should say so.

On single-question responses, large university agreement-averages went down on 'research is more important than undergraduate teaching' from 3 to 3.4, but the '3' shows that this had never been a very widespread belief before; they also went down from 2.4 to 3.0 on the item 'the opportunity to conduct research is the most important part of academic work'. On the other hand agreement-averages on the item 'academics must realise that teaching is really the most important part of their academic job' went down from 1.9 each to 2.6 and 2.4 in large and small (now ex-) CAEs. Small universities and ex-CAEs also went down on the often-made assertion that 'academics who have ceased doing research are not able to teach as well as their researching colleagues'. These are only some of the single items, but on no others among this set of scales were there any more to offset them.

In another question we asked plump and plain: 'In general, where do your own teaching and research interests lie?' Responses converted to percentages for easy comparison are as follows on Table 3:

Here the same picture presents itself. Very little change in staff orientations on their major dimension; down where they are growing the roses by their new names smell much the same, and with much the

Table 3: Perceptions of main intertests by institutional type across samples; percentages										
	Mainly in research		Both, learning to research		Equally in both		Both, learning to teach		Mainly in teaching	
	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992
Big unis	9.2	3.7	44.8	48.2	29.3	25.9	8.6	14.8	8.1	7.4
Small unis	9.0	8.8	45.2	38.2	25.4	29.4	16.1	17.7	4.3	5.9
Big coll	1.1	4.0	16.4	28.0	26.0	32.0	33.0	16.0	23.2	20.0
Small coll.	1.3	0.0	12.4	14.3	16.3	14.3	41.8	50.0	28.1	21.4

same differences across the beds, as before.

Satisfaction

However abstracted we may pretend to be for research-reporting purposes, the fact remains that we earn our daily bread and jam in today's higher educational system and often rather wish we were working in one of those more honest fields of proletarian endeavour where there was a clear stopping-time to signal self-actualisation's permitted start. In other words, we who work in the system did not expect to find responses which show a burgeoning of job-satisfaction. Nor did we find one. Although, to be as honest as befits survey-researchers a little ashamed of their hasty and overly-small sampling, we were a little surprised to find so much still around the academic traps.

Satisfactions were measured on a scale from 1 to 6, again with 1 being the most satisfied and 3.5 the division between overall satisfaction and overall misery. Here again, of course, individuals differed greatly in both our first and our second samples. Here again, as with the 'orientations' questions, we grouped our items according to an earlier exploratory correlation test into dimensions or sub-scales variously grouping from two to four separate response scales (see Hort and Oxley 1989). Here again, we have divided according to the number of scales grouped so as to give numbers from a totally-

Table 4: Satisfaction overall and in five dimensions					
The larger numbers again denote the lesser - in this case lower satisfaction levels					
	1987		1992		
	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)	Mean (sd)	
Overall			Students		
Big unis	2.73 (0.77)	2.88 (0.68)	Big unis	2.39 (0.88)	2.69 (0.84)
Small unis.	2.73 (0.73)	2.84 (0.68)	Small unis.	2.50 (0.85)	2.70 (0.92)
Big coll.	3.03 (0.74)	3.07 (0.78)	Big coll.	2.72 (0.89)	2.87 (0.82)
Small coll.	3.09 (0.88)	3.65 (1.04)	Small coll.	2.88 (0.99)	3.42 (1.55)
Opportunities for personal advancement			Administrative involvement		
Big unis	2.45 (0.92)	2.67 (1.09)	Big unis	3.40 (1.17)	3.38 (1.17)
Small unis.	2.55 (0.89)	2.74 (1.18)	Small unis.	3.32 (1.11)	3.18 (1.17)
Big coll.	3.05 (1.04)	2.95 (0.98)	Big coll.	3.85 (1.20)	3.87 (1.25)
Small coll.	3.18 (1.10)	3.75 (1.27)	Small coll.	3.79 (1.34)	4.67 (1.27)
Colleagues			Voice in major decision-making		
Big unis	2.87 (1.25)	2.65 (1.28)	Big unis	3.27 (1.19)	3.44 (1.32)
Small unis.	2.75 (1.14)	2.65 (1.08)	Small unis.	3.16 (1.23)	3.25 (1.48)
Big coll.	2.90 (1.02)	2.74 (0.91)	Big coll.	3.53 (1.28)	3.36 (1.34)
Small coll.	2.95 (1.12)	3.32 (1.32)	Small coll.	3.57 (1.34)	4.65 (1.18)

satisfied 1 to a totally dissatisfied 6. The means on average and in terms of those dimensions are shown on table 4.

There is a slight increase in dissatisfaction overall with all institutions, but with satisfaction still rated between 'mildly satisfied' and

'moderately satisfied' in the old Universities and between 'mildly satisfied' and 'mildly dissatisfied' in the old CAEs. There was a general drop in satisfaction on all the subscales, except that concerned with colleagues (which is not a statistically significant increase) with no particularly interesting drop - the severity of the drop in satisfaction in the small colleges may have been due to the sampling characteristic which we mentioned earlier.

Academics often complain of stress at work. This was the biggest contributor to dissatisfaction in the 1987 sample, and it still is, and it seems indeed to have got worse. On table 5 below we give percentages from 'extremely satisfied' plus 'moderately satisfied' (there were too

Table 5: Responses to the question among 'satisfactions' on 'stress and tension at work'										
	Very/moderately satisfied		Mildly satisfied		Mildly dissatisfied		Moderately dissatisfied		Extremely dissatisfied	
	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992
Big unis.	41.0	29.6	17.9	22.2	16.8	14.8	14.5	18.5	9.8	14.8
Small unis.	36.5	35.3	15.6	17.7	18.4	8.8	19.0	23.5	10.6	14.7
Big coll.	24.0	16.0	22.3	12.0	21.1	28.0	21.7	24.0	10.9	20.0
Small coll.	26.1	21.4	20.7	14.3	14.2	14.3	22.6	14.3	15.5	35.7

few responding in the first category to make it worth a column) to 'extremely dissatisfied'.

Clearly stress is becoming an increasingly problematic feature of our work.

Not that they are all agreed that other people in lives other than the academic have things much better. We asked the question 'considering your life situation as a whole - how would you say it compares to

Table 6: Invidious comparisons; Lives in NON-academic life situations are (percentages):										
	Much poorer		Somewhat poorer		About the same		Somewhat better		Much better	
	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992
Big unis.	14.7	16.7	37.1	33.3	17.1	8.3	21.2	33.3	10.0	8.3
Small unis.	16.5	11.8	34.0	26.5	16.8	29.4	25.1	20.6	7.6	11.8
Big coll.	12.4	20.0	29.2	40.0	20.8	12.0	24.7	24.0	12.9	4.0
Small coll.	7.7	0.0	28.4	21.4	20.0	21.4	33.6	35.7	10.3	21.4

that of most other individuals of equivalent age and ability and training in non-academic occupations?

In that last matter workers in the larger universities are still the most satisfied with their lot, although a few are beginning to question the benefits of that life more than before. We were very surprised by the sanguine findings from our small sample from the old Institutes of Technology (big coll); our prior hypothesising had accepted them as a wild card, but we only came to this question after getting lulled into assumptions that they were fitting into the old pattern pretty well - we just do not know why such sanguine feelings should reign in them in this invidious comparison, unless they contain many escapees from that wider world. We are not at all surprised that the smaller universities should show less sanguine responses than the larger, because they tend to be under more threat; one point upon which we always did agree with Dawkins is that (except in the way we code our satisfaction ratings) small is not beautiful.

More familiar and thus expected patterns came up in the new survey of people's willingness to recommend the 'academic' career to students of high potential. Here the question read 'if you had an especially able student of high potential for any of a number of careers, would you recommend his/her aiming at a career as an

Australian academic?' This question was not well worded because of the 'Australian' in it, for one is beginning to suspect nowadays that the topmost intellectuals of any kind can best make the Big-time by moving outside of Australia. It is also problematic because different sectors become accustomed to students of different kinds and different ability-levels. As working course-advisers as well as teachers, we both know how students 'especially able' by Great University standards might well seek their fortunes via an Australian job in international academe (a little like golf in offering riches to the uttermost international tops but rags to the 'upper seconds'), but an 'especially able' student by CAE standards might very sensibly be advised in directions where the local action is - which may indeed not be those of local academe. Be these matters as they may, the responses to that question (and their changes over the half-decade as best our little

Table 7: Recommending an academic career to a top student (percentages):										
	Definitely would		Probably would		Undecided		Probably would not		Definitely would not	
	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992	1987	1992
Big unis.	27.0	30.8	37.9	26.9	13.8	11.5	16.1	26.9	5.2	3.9
Small unis.	28.2	17.7	37.3	38.2	16.9	20.6	13.5	14.7	4.1	8.8
Big coll.	14.1	12.0	42.4	32.0	22.0	20.0	18.1	28.0	3.4	8.0
Small coll.	15.5	7.1	35.5	21.4	18.7	14.3	25.8	50.0	4.5	7.1

sample could get them) are as follows on Table 7.

Conclusion

While the size of the sample (and its representativeness, with only 34% analysed for this paper) for the recent study causes us to be cautious in stating conclusions, the pattern of results seems to us to be suggestive indeed. Despite the renaming of institutions, and the amalgamation the our (previously) big and small colleges with large and prestigious universities, the same differences that we observed in 1987 continue to exist. Overall, all institutions are showing decreased levels of satisfaction with their work, and with their students, and their administration. Levels of stress and tension at work are seen to be unsatisfactory by a greater percentage of respondents across all sectors. Academics' role orientations as teachers and researchers again do not show much change across what were the different sectors. In the Likert scale items, the agreement with items about both teaching and research seem to have decreased, and self identifications as teachers in the old university sector, and researchers in the old CAE sector seem to be changing only very slowly if at all. Things may change in the future. Meantime the roses (and other blooms) under their new names seem to smell much the same as before.

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The emergence of higher education as an industry: The second tier awards and award restructuring

Jan Currie,
Murdoch University

Academics have recently entered into the industrial arena with the second tier awards of 1987-8 and award restructuring of 1989-91. It was the Social Welfare Union Case in 1983 (47 ALR 225) that had set the scene for a redefinition of the term 'industrial dispute' to include disputes in sectors such as higher education. This paved the way for the first federal industrial awards for academic staff in 1987.

Academics have been one of the last groups in the workforce to become unionised. In 1952 university staff associations joined to form the Federal Council of University Staff Associations, which became the Federation of Australian University Staff Associations (FAUSA) in 1964. The Federation of Staff Associations of Colleges of Advanced Education was formed in August 1968 and later became the Federation of College Academics (FCA) and the Union of Australian College Academics (UACA) in 1983. These associations were only loosely formed to achieve limited goals. There was no suggestion that these associations should act as 'unions' to press for better working conditions and contemplate industrial action to increase wages; however, as O'Brien (1992) has argued, the period from the 1950s to the 1980s was a time when relations in the higher education sector shifted from 'post-feudal community to the achievement of modernity,' when the nascent form of an industrial relations' model could be detected.

FAUSA first applied for registration as a federal union in 1979. This was denied and a challenge to this decision was lost in the High Court in 1982. The two principal unions covering academics, the Federated Australian University Staff Associations (FAUSA) and the Union of Australian College Academics (UACA) were registered as unions in 1986 and 1987 (respectively) and it was then that they began to negotiate a national award with the employers who, in the meantime, had formed the Australian Higher Education Industrial Association (AHEIA).

It was only during the 1980s, when the associations became registered as unions, that there was any discussion of the use of industrial action to gain better working conditions. In Victoria, UACA was the first academic union to take industrial action over the proportions of contract employment in the early 1980s (in 1984 at one institution and in 1987, state-wide). The pressure to become more organised as unions coincided with a dramatic increase in the number of staff and students in higher education institutions during the 1970s and 1980s. Between 1987 to 1991, there was a corresponding decline in working conditions that especially affected pre - 1987 university academics as the government reduced the student per capita funding and introduced a series of 'clawbacks' in research funding. At the same time there was a dramatic decline in real wages. Marginson (1990) analysed the decline of academic salaries between 1967 to 1990 and reported that:

Since 1975-76 the total annual salary received by a Senior Lecturer has declined by 18.9 per cent in real terms. In the last financial year (1988-89), before any award restructuring increases had been received, Australian academics received less wages in real terms than they did in 1967-1968. (1990, p 3)

The Awards

Since 1983 the Accord agreements between the Australian Council of Trade Unions (ACTU) and the Labor Government have provided for one of the most significant and historic shifts in economic policy and industrial relations in the capitalist world (ACTU, 1989; Ewer et al, 1991). This paper will examine specifically Accord Mark III, in effect during 1987 and 1988 (which led in the higher education sector to the creation of specific awards loosely known as the 'second tier' awards) and Accord Mark V, negotiated during 1989-91, which included provision for a process of so-called 'award restructuring'.

This discussion is based on interviews with seven officials from FAUSA and UACA, two AHEIA industrial officers and one Vice-Chancellor involved in the award restructuring negotiations in 1990-1991. Table 1 outlines the perspectives of AHEIA and the unions on what they felt they gained or lost from the second tier awards and what they hoped they may gain from award restructuring since at the time of the interviews the negotiations were still on-going.

Second Tier Awards

The so-called second tier wage round was influenced by Australia's poor economic performance and proposed the principles of 'restructuring' and 'efficiency'. The principles of wage fixation formulated by the National Wage Bench provided for two tiers: the first consisted of a flat increase of \$10 per week in March 1987 and a \$6 increase in October 1987; the second tier was not to exceed 4% and it was only granted if there were changes in work patterns and management practices. The second tier did not translate into wage increases for all workers and the process was considered inequitable and time consuming. Lower income earners, traditionally clustered in unions that have less industrial power and in jobs that have fewer over-award conditions to trade, had trouble obtaining the second tier. Industrially stronger unions had little difficulty obtaining the 4% increase and, as no retrospectivity applied, the disparity between workers was increased due to the timing of the increases.

Academics did not receive the second tier pay adjustments until the first pay period on or after 21 June 1988. It was the beginning of the national regulation of working conditions but one in which academics felt that there had been a nasty trade off for only a small salary rise. It was widely felt that, in this first attempt at regulation, there was a deterioration in their working conditions. By eventually introducing redundancy and dismissal procedures (determined in 1989 by two separate rounds of arbitrated proceedings), it undermined the notion of academic tenure and was seen as a threat to academic freedom. Out of the four aspects introduced, only one, staff development, favoured academics. The other three, staff assessment and potential dismissal for unsatisfactory performance or serious misconduct, redundancy and regulation of long service leave, were all to assist employers.

Despite the benefits gained by the employers, they viewed the second tier with some apprehension because they bemoaned the loss of autonomy of institutions and saw the setting of national standards as counter-productive. Actually, this award combined a national framework for award conditions while maintaining some autonomy