



***The Pilgrim's Progress: early-career academic nurses'
journey of shaping, strengthening and sustaining a
career mindset***

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

under the supervision of:

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University of Technology Sydney
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Certificate of original authorship

I, Aileen Wyllie, declare that this thesis is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Health at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

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Statement: format of the thesis

The thesis is presented as a compilation of chapters and publications. Chapters 1, 3, 7 and 8 follow a traditional format. Chapters 2, 4, 5 and 6 include published manuscripts, inserted as pdfs. Chapter 7 includes content for a future publication, and Chapter 8 focuses on the discussion and conclusions.

Format of chapters without publications:

Chapters 1, 3, 7 and 8 follow conventional format with introduction, aim, content and summary sections. They exist to support the four-phase longitudinal study.

Format of chapters with publications:

Chapter 2 contains the published systematic literature review, and Chapters 4, 5 and 6 contain publications which make up the four-phase longitudinal qualitative descriptive study. They have introduction and aim sections, describe the impact of the publications, their key findings, and present the publications in full.

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Statement of contributions

We, Tracy-Levett-Jones, Michelle DiGiacomo and Patricia Davidson, attest that we participated in all aspects of the preparation of the following publication, but the higher degree candidate, Aileen Wyllie, was the principal contributor to its conception, design, writing and revision.

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Glossary

Attribute	A quality of a person.
Career growth	Learning new skills and putting them to work, taking on new challenges and responsibilities, improving credentials and management skills.
Career planning process	A process designed to help individuals examine their careers; evaluate their training and educational needs; and develop some specific action plans to maintain, enhance, and re-evaluate the relevance of their professional and managerial skills in a work environment that values rapid change and adaptation.
Casual academic	An employee engaged and paid by the hour, rather than employed on an ongoing basis or for a set period on a salary.
Early-career academic nurse (ECAN)	A registered nurse with substantial clinical experience, enrolled or completed a PhD and within seven years of obtaining an ongoing university position to progress a career.
Fixed mindset	The mindset of an individual who believes their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are simply fixed traits. A belief that talent alone creates success – without effort.
Growth mindset	The mindset of an individual who believes their talents can be developed through hard work, good strategies, and input from others, and that you can change yourself and the world around you.
Habits of mind	Patterns of intellectual behaviour that lead to productive actions. They mean we value one pattern of intellectual behaviour over another, and make choices about which patterns we should use at certain times.
Learning mindset	An individual's basic orientation towards the act of learning.
Mindset	A mindset is about expression and an approach toward a task. It is a collection of thoughts and beliefs that shape our thought habits, which in turn affect thinking, feelings and actions.
Objective career success	Commonly defined in terms of progress along a hierarchy of power or prestige, and measured by criteria such as salary, promotion rate, hierarchical level and/or status.
PECAN	Program for Early-Career Academic Nurses.
Sessional academic	A term used in some universities to describe casual academic employees, as casual academics are often employed for 'sessions' or semester teaching periods.

Abbreviations

CV	curriculum vitae
ECAN	Early-Career Academic Nurse
EDC	Engagement and Development Committee
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
PECAN	Program for Early-Career Academic Nurses

ABSTRACT

Background

There is an emerging body of literature on the experiences of early career academic nurses with a particular focus on their learning needs and how they can best be supported as they compete for success in a highly competitive and rapidly changing environment. Managing an academic career can be challenging and there is a need to fully understand the attitudes, abilities and habits that contribute to a successful career mindset. This knowledge will benefit both early career academics and higher education providers wishing to implement supportive interventions aimed at capacity building and retention.

Research Design and Methods

This study followed a group of early career academic nurses over a period of three years. The aim of the study was to explore their experiences of *shaping, strengthening* and *sustaining* career growth. A systematic literature review followed by a four phase-study was undertaken. Phase one explored the early career academic nurses' initial career journey. In phase two a supportive educational intervention was trialled and critically evaluated. Phase three consisted of collective narratives that identified key elements of participants' *growth mindset* and how it intersected with their career success; and Phase four was added using a narrative-based approach to represent the early career academic nurses' progress. A qualitative descriptive design was used with data thematically analysed using the six-phase approach of Braun, Clarke, and Gray (2017). This thesis is presented as a compilation of chapters and publications.

Key Findings

Early career academic nurses spend a great deal of time and energy aiming to construct a successful career. A supportive educational program that facilitated the development of attributes that support a growth mindset was found to engender success and generate opportunities for career progress. A *'growth mindset'* was viewed as the best way to understand and enhance personal abilities that assist with strengthening and sustaining the academic journey. The early career academic nurses in this study viewed support as a range

of factors and learning opportunities that allowed them to shape and strengthen their individual career path.

Conclusions

This study adds to the literature about early career academic nurse's long-term experiences in undertaking an academic career. It identified that building a successful academic career demands input from both the individuals and senior leadership. While the early career academic nurses must seek to develop dispositions to meet demands that accompany an academic career, higher education providers need to implement programs and supportive strategies that enhance the skills and abilities of early career academic nurses to promote their success and retention.

PROLOGUE – Starting the journey

*To begin is the most important part of any quest
and by far the most courageous*

Plato

For the early-career academic nurse (ECAN), the start of a career in academia requires adjustment to the tertiary education setting. Many have goals and plans and believe that if they work hard, a successful academic career will follow. Some achieve success through hard work, an optimistic attitude and accessing appropriate support to develop their skills and get to know the ropes. The way forward in the career journey may have different meanings for different people, because career destinations can change over time even though the quest can remain true. Many who have been achieved success say that their experiences during the journey had a powerful impact on them.

One of the most-read books in English literature is John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*. This classic tale of a Christian's quest has been in print continuously since 1678 (Batson, 1988). Many scholars have used this story to illustrate that a person can face severe trials in a complex journey and still achieve success.

The Pilgrim's Progress begins with the central figure Christian embarking on a difficult journey because he wants to reap the rewards of salvation. In his haste towards his goal, he falls into the Slough of Despond and almost drowns, but with assistance from Help, takes to the path again, but with some uncertainty and doubt. From this point on his destination is clear, but he is increasingly anxious and unsure of what he needs to do to succeed. Several characters set out to distract him and lead him away from the pathway to his goal. The first of these is Mr Worldly Wiseman, who tells him that his journey to the Celestial City is unnecessary; then, Mr Legality and Mr Civility promise to consolidate all of his sins into one handy burden, which he can discard. Other encounters are with Sloth and Hypocrisy, who offer similar discouragements, and the Interpreter, who tests his resolve.

Christian is saved from these figures by the Evangelist, who appears from time to time to reassure him and reconnect him to his journey. When he reaches House Beautiful, the maidens Charity, Prudence, Piety, and Discretion give him a sword and shield to fight the fierce Apollyon. From House Beautiful, he can see the Delectable Mountains a short journey

from the Celestial City, and feels optimistic. But more challenges arise, including a fight with the Prince of the City of Destruction, a journey through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and – accompanied by a fellow pilgrim named Faithful – a visit to Vanity Fair. When Christian and Faithful refused to be tempted by any of the goods for sale, they are arrested. After a corrupt trial, Faithful is burned to death, but Christian breaks out of jail before he can suffer the same fate, and Hopeful helps to smuggle him away – only for them both to be imprisoned again, this time by the Giant named Despair, who lives at Doubting Castle. They find a key called Promise, which releases them from the Giant’s dungeon, and they reach the Delectable Mountains.

Christian’s drive to reach his goal is strong. He encounters many obstacles and challenges and puts a great deal of effort into trying to resist the voices of distraction and doom that strive to sway him from his path. Eventually, after receiving a parchment that enables him to enter the Celestial City, and fording the dreaded River of Death, Christian arrives at his destination and for him the quest to reach the heavenly city has been successful, despite the hardships.

Christian’s heavenly destination was clear, but the road was not easy. Success came only as a result of learning about himself and making sense of his experiences during the journey. He had to make great efforts, be vigilant and willing to re-evaluate his journey in order to achieve success. The likely nature of his journey was unknown when he took his first steps, but was worth taking for the reward it promised. Similarly, rewards for academics usually come over time but it cannot be assumed that the road to success is just a matter of hard work and that time will take care of the rest. A successful academic career requires focus and a deliberate plan for growth. It requires support mechanisms that empower the individual to take charge of their journey. Commitment and critical reflection are also needed if the early-career academic is to learn, grow and progress.

**PART ONE: SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE PILGRIM'S
JOURNEY**

CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND

Christian weighs his options on whether to go back to his own country, which is prepared for fire and brimstone, or go forward to the Celestial City with lions standing in his way.

John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Part 1, Par. 216.

This chapter begins with a definition of the early-career academic nurse (ECAN). This is followed by an overview of the academic landscape in Australia over the last 10-12 years, the changing conditions for academics and the impacts of these changes, with particular attention to ECANs. A discussion of the challenges encountered when embarking on an academic career is then provided, followed by the aim of the research and the key research questions that framed this four-phase study. The chapter concludes with a summary of the research design and an outline of the thesis structure.

1.1 The early-career academic nurse

For the purposes of this research an ECAN was classified as an academic who is a registered nurse, has substantial clinical expertise, has not necessarily completed a doctorate and is within seven years of commencing a full-time or ongoing academic appointment. The position having an opportunity for steady employment, a career path and continuous research development (Bosanquet, Mailey, Matthews, & Lodge, 2017). This definition encompasses the five years that the Australian research literature uses to define early-career academics (Hemmings, 2012), and allows for career interruptions such as parental leave or family responsibilities. The maximum figure of seven years for classification of an ECAN has also been reflected in Australian government policy documents and reports at the commencement of this project (Bexley, James, & Arkoudis, 2011; Coates & Goedegebuure, 2012).

1.2 The changing academic environment

The Bradley Review of the direction of Australia's higher education system, initiated in March 2008, opened the way for major change across the sector (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales, 2008). The federal government commissioned the review, appointing Emerita Professor Denise Bradley to lead the independent review panel. The resulting report was acknowledged

by many educationalists as one of the most important documents of its time. The review led to Australia becoming a major international player in higher education, with large increases in the numbers of international students, and education becoming one of Australia's leading exports (Norton, Norton, & Cakitaki, 2016). These changes boosted education's role in the broader Australian economy (Monitor, 2018) and intensified the efforts of government and education regulators to implement a quality monitoring system (Stagg et al., 2018).

1.2.1 The focus on staffing following the Bradley Report

In the wake of the Bradley Report, staffing in Australian higher education became a pressing issue. Until this time, scant attention had been paid to maintaining and replenishing the academic workforce, but it rapidly became a priority. Several set of researchers were commissioned to review the experiences of people working in higher education, with a particular focus on retention and attrition. Coates and Goedegebuure (2010) and Bexley et al. (2011) examined all levels of Australian academia and documented extensive frustration and dissatisfaction. Of the early-career academics surveyed (nurses included), the frustration centred on growing workload, rising student numbers and insufficient opportunities to participate in professional development. For example, typical statements from academic staff were:

I have virtually no control and limited autonomy in my current position (lecturer level B), and support from management and permanent staff numbers are the lowest in the university sector. We are so overloaded with administrative work and marking that there is little time left for truly intellectually stimulating work. (Bexley et al., 2011, p. 34)

Compounding the frustration for academics, the cap on domestic student enrolments was removed in 2012 (Dow & Braithwaite, 2013). Student numbers had been rising steadily in Australian universities since the year 1996 (Coates et al., 2009), but in 2013 the Bradley Report opened the flood gates for a massive increase in both local and international students. This decision increased teaching responsibilities and associated administrative duties for academics employed within the sector, resulting in almost 50% of those interviewed naming stress as something that was part of the role and they found ways of coping or, left the job Bexley et al. (2011). The report also noted that attrition was highest in the younger cohort of

academics, many of whom saw better opportunities and career prospects, with less stress, in industry or overseas (Bexley et al., 2011).

The ongoing attrition of academic staff drew attention to the need for a solution. A comprehensive review by Hugo and Morriss (2010) recommended that the sector needed to *'replace almost half its staff within the next five to seven years'* (p. 50) if quality was to be maintained. Bexley et al. (2011) added that strategies should concentrate on attracting younger academics and experienced researchers (p. xiii). Employing both would go some way to fill the gap left by those leaving to progress their careers elsewhere or retire. In recognition of the situation and need for action, Coates and Goedegebuure (2012) proposed *'recasting the academic workforce'* at national, institutional, faculty and individual levels to provide successful educational programs, and introducing national moves to retain talented postdoctoral academics (p. 886). It was recognised that these initiatives would take time to realise, and that any immediate actions relied on the government bodies implementing strategies to urgently replenish and support academics (Bexley, Arkoudis, & James, 2013; Coates & Goedegebuure, 2012).

For nursing faculties in particular, replenishing junior academic staff is not an easy task. A report in 2006 from the World Health Organisation just prior to the Bradley Report, told of an imminent global nursing shortage of due to the aging nursing workforce and the need for action to replace them (Organization, 2006). Contemporary nursing literature supporting this view (Oulton, 2006) and in the process drawing attention to the shortage of suitably qualified nurse academics to cope with the gap that the retirees would bring (Nardi & Gyurko, 2013). McDermid, Peters, Jackson, and Daly (2012) adding that not only was there a lack of candidates but faculties had difficulties in attracting potential ECANs to move from a lucrative clinical role to a less well-paid junior position that carried uncertainty for progress in a highly competitive environment (p. 566).

1.2.2 Universities' responses to staffing needs

Research in the years since the Bradley Review has shown that universities had some success in recruitment of academic staff (Bexley et al., 2011). However, it was also recognised that the making and keeping of quality academic staff can take years of strategic planning, individual success, faculty commitment and funding (Bexley et al., 2011). Support in the form

of scholarships (Brew, 2010), mentorship (Halcomb et al., 2014) and professional development programs (Hitch, Macfarlane, & Nihill, 2015) were welcome measures, but relied heavily on available resources and the support of experienced academics who were in increasingly short supply.

Meanwhile, the number of university places being offered to students in Australian universities continued to grow (Suri & Beckett, 2012), forcing universities to do *'more with less while also continuing to compete in global rankings'* (Lodge, 2015, p. 16/Highlights). Accommodating this continued student expansion and, at the same time, ensuring quality standards, was not going to be a *'quick fix'* (Norton et al., 2016) and solutions were required for the system to cope with the influx of students.

1.3 The solution taken and its impact

The following sub-sections discuss the strategy of hiring casual and sessional staff to combat staffing needs and the impact this had for those already employed in junior positions.

1.3.1 Increase in casual and sessional academics

Rather than hire full time (permanent staff) the strategy used by universities at this time in order to cope with the student increase was to employ casual academics, who are engaged and paid by the hour, or sessional academics, who are employed for 'sessions' or semester teaching periods (Bexley et al., 2011). These staff usually fill the lowest-paid teaching jobs and according to Halcomb et al. (2014) casual staff were also often hired with the intent to fill the gaps brought about by a combination of retiring staff and rising student numbers, because they are less costly than the more expensive career academics who form part of the universities' ongoing staffing cohort.

Over the years there have been conflicting reports about the exact numbers of casual staff employed in the Australian university sector. In 2013, one report estimated that on a full-time equivalent basis, there was *'significant reliance on academic staff employed under casual work contracts'* (Ryan, Burgess, Connell, & Groen, 2013, p. 165). Figures from superannuation reports in 2013, however, indicate that a little over 20% of the staff in universities were casual and hired specifically for teaching and marking (May, Peetz, & Strachan, 2013). In a later comprehensive study (Norton et al., 2016), it was reported that *'more than 40 per cent*

reported having worked on a casual or sessional basis for six or more years' (p. 35). Their proportion increased significantly in Australia over 2019 and 2020, with casual staff thought to constitute 60% of all academic university staff (Bare, 2020).

1.3.2 The impact of casual and sessional staff on junior academics

Casual academic staff, unlike those in full-time employment usually have little or no contractual obligation to perform management or research (May, Strachan, Broadbent, & Peetz, 2011). Sessional academics have more stability of employment (Richardson, Wardale, & Lord, 2019) but similarly little responsibility for management or research, leaving continuing academics to carry much heavier teaching workloads (Flecknoe et al., 2017) or more importantly, shoulder most of the day-to-day managerial and administration work (McDermid et al., 2012). This has caused stress and been detrimental to the wellbeing and work-life balance of continuing academics (Rainnie, Goods, Bahn, & Burgess, 2013). This trend towards ever-greater use of casual and sessional staff has caused ECAN's enthusiasm for academia to wane, because non-continuing employment means they have less time to develop and consolidate their research interests (Hemmings, 2012; Johnson, Cowin, Wilson, & Young, 2012).

Junior academics are particularly vulnerable to the demands, vagaries and complexities of the current Australian academic work environment, and hence often struggle to forge a successful career. As a result, many academics, including ECANs, leave academia to take up positions elsewhere (Bexley et al., 2011).

The intention to leave Australian higher education is highest among the younger age groups. Close to 40 per cent of academics under 30 years of age plan to leave Australian higher education in the next five to ten years, with 13 to 18 per cent intending to leave in the immediate future. Around one-third of staff aged 30-39 years intend to leave in the next five to ten years. (page xii)

Therefore, there is a dire need to focus on the transition experiences of ECANs so as to implement appropriate support strategies and career planning opportunities.

1.4 The nurse academic and the career journey

Prior to the 2000s an academic was viewed as a *'change agent for students and the social context in which they operate'* (Doring, 2002, p. 139). This notion emerged from the intellectual and personal transformation associated with teaching and research in the advancement of knowledge (Ramsden, 1998). Following the changing higher education environment of the late 2000's there was a *'perceived shift in the academic role from an agent of change, primarily through their academic activity, to one of victim of change'* (Doring, 2002, p. 140). This shift required adaptation for those employed as academics, especially to meet the expectations of the university and the mounting faculty responsibilities. The following sub-sections discuss nurse academic adjustment and expectations of their role and career.

1.4.1 Adjusting to being a nurse academic

Nursing entered the Australian university sector later than many other fields, and the rapid changes during the early 2000s made transition into academia a particularly difficult experience for many nurses (Cantwell, 2014). Role ambiguity and role conflict was common (Whitehead, 2015). According to Gutierrez, Candela, and Carver (2012), during the early 2000s Australian tertiary institutions fostered a *'myriad of academic identities'* (p. 1603), with staff required to assume the roles of teacher, technologist, administrator and independent researcher, in order to successfully fulfil the academic role. This was a daunting proposition for junior academics who had spent many years attaining their doctorates in order to obtain an academic position, but had little experience of administration, teaching or applying for research funding. Junior academics were usually left to construct their academic identities through experience (McAlpine, Amundsen, & Turner, 2014), socialisation (Johnson et al., 2012) and compromise (Churchman, 2006) in an unknown and increasingly competitive environment (Henkel, 2005).

Although older academics have been retiring in large numbers in recent years (Schwartz, 2019), there has been an increase in competition for – and increasing expectations of – their positions. Publications, citations and grants still dominate selection criteria, and junior academics are expected to arrive with a wide range of teaching skills, curriculum design experience, and familiarity with the use of differing educational technologies, as well as being able to demonstrate evidence of leadership and/or service. While a doctorate provides

grounding in research, and usually some in teaching, it does not prepare the newly employed academic to design and deliver high-quality teaching, engage with the broader community, or leadership and entrepreneurial skills. Many commentators believe that newly appointed academics require more time and support to understand these expectations before assuming heavy workloads so that they can be sufficiently prepared for their role (Matthews, Lodge, & Bosanquet, 2014). Others maintain that support is important, but novice academics need to be proactive and take charge of their own career pathways and profiles (Coates & Goedegebuure, 2010).

1.4.2 Engaging with a leadership role

ECANs are essential for the sustainability of the nursing academic discipline and are viewed as future leaders. Yet, according to Australian studies, nurse academic numbers have been shrinking over the last 10–20 years due to *'role strain'* and *'role confusion'* (Halcomb et al., 2014) and they are being replaced, as stated earlier, by casual or sessional academics. The ECANs who remain struggle to meet management demands and simultaneously engage with the academic environment (Peters, 2014). The largely autonomous academic environment presents a challenge for many ECANs who transition from highly structured clinical work environments. Support is required for this transitioning period so that ECANS gain an understanding of their role.

1.4.3 Career planning and development

Restructuring and rapid change in universities have had a profound impact globally, not only on the workplace, but on the relationship between academics and their career plans and development. Traditional career progression has changed over the past decade as careers take on a more global perspective (Baruch & Reis, 2016), forcing academics to be adaptable and take more responsibility for forging a *'career identity'* and developing the requisite skills (Musselin, 2013). Collin (2011) argued that all academics need to become more proactive and that self-awareness is a necessity when making career plans. A British study of 146 nursing academics described how the participants had taken a pedagogical approach to becoming self-managers and regarded it as an important part of their role and future development (Smith & Boyd, 2012).

Career planning is an iterative process (Andre & Heartfield, 2016) that involves the ability to skilfully assess one's strengths and articulate a personal career vision and realistic plan for the future (Collin, 2011). This is vital to every stage of professional development. Career planning needs to be individualised because people vary in experience, personal lives and priorities (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2018) and each of these influences career success.

1.4.4 Career progression path

Career progression usually happens as a result of sound planning and development. At most universities in Australia, career progression follows a somewhat predictable path, with standardised job titles corresponding to salary ranges set out by the Australian government and each university maintaining an enterprise bargaining agreement. In Australia, it is generally accepted that career academics have postgraduate research experience at doctorate (PhD) level, though in some cases professional experience or business or community successes may be considered commensurate with a doctorate. To achieve academic career progression and promotion requires evidence of achievement in the three spheres of research, teaching and service.

1.4.5 A career mindset

A mindset is about attitude and approach to a task. Simply put, it is how we see and express ourselves through a collection of thoughts and beliefs that shape our habits of mind. Our thought habits affect how we think, what we feel, and what we do and, applying these sentiments to career building can be a challenging exercise. Those with a positive career mindset are said to actively seek opportunities and lean toward a '*growth mindset*' (Burnette et al., 2020) using the assistance of '*habits of mind*' (Costa & Kallick, 2008) and Knowles (1970) pedagogical adult learning theory. All are key to the study of ECANs' career mindset, and were examined in this research in the context of ECANs' experiences of change and career growth.

1.5 The author's interest in the topic

My interest in the career progression of ECANs has two sources. In my previous academic role, I provided support to newly employed ECANs, and I witnessed first-hand the challenges that many of them experienced in adjusting to the academic environment and related expectations. I wanted to understand their journey more fully and identify how they could be

best supported to personalise their learning. The second motivation for my interest was my desire to add the ECAN voice to the academic discourse on the career journey to enable meaningful recommendations for improvements to their experiences in career building.

1.6 Research aim and questions

The overall aim of the study was to critically examine the career mindsets of a cohort of ECANs as they progressed through their careers. In particular, I sought to explore the experiences that shaped and strengthened their career mindsets and the personal qualities that sustained them. I employed a qualitative approach to explore the nuances of change over time and answer the overarching research question:

What are the experiences that have shaped and strengthened Australian ECANs career mindsets and the personal qualities that sustained them?

I formulated secondary aims and research questions for the study's phases, as detailed below.

Phase 1: Shaping the career mindset

Aim: To explore ECANs' experiences as they shape their careers.

Research question: How do ECANs approach the task of building a career and what are their experiences of navigating a career?

The findings from Phase 1 were incorporated into a customised reflective Program for ECANs (PECAN), which was implemented and evaluated in Phase 2.

Phase 2: Strengthening a career mindset

Aim: To implement and evaluate a customised program designed to facilitate ECANs' critical reflection on factors that were perceived to strengthen a career mindset.

Research question: How do ECANs describe the experiences of being a participant in the customised reflective program?

Phase 3: Sustaining a career mindset

Aim: To explore the qualities that sustained ECAN career mindsets.

Research question: What qualities assisted the ECANs to sustain their career mindsets?

Phase 4: Stories of career progress

Aim: To demonstrate through narratives the impact of a growth mindset on career progress.

Research question: What is the impact of a growth mindset on career progress for ECANs?

1.7 Overview of research design

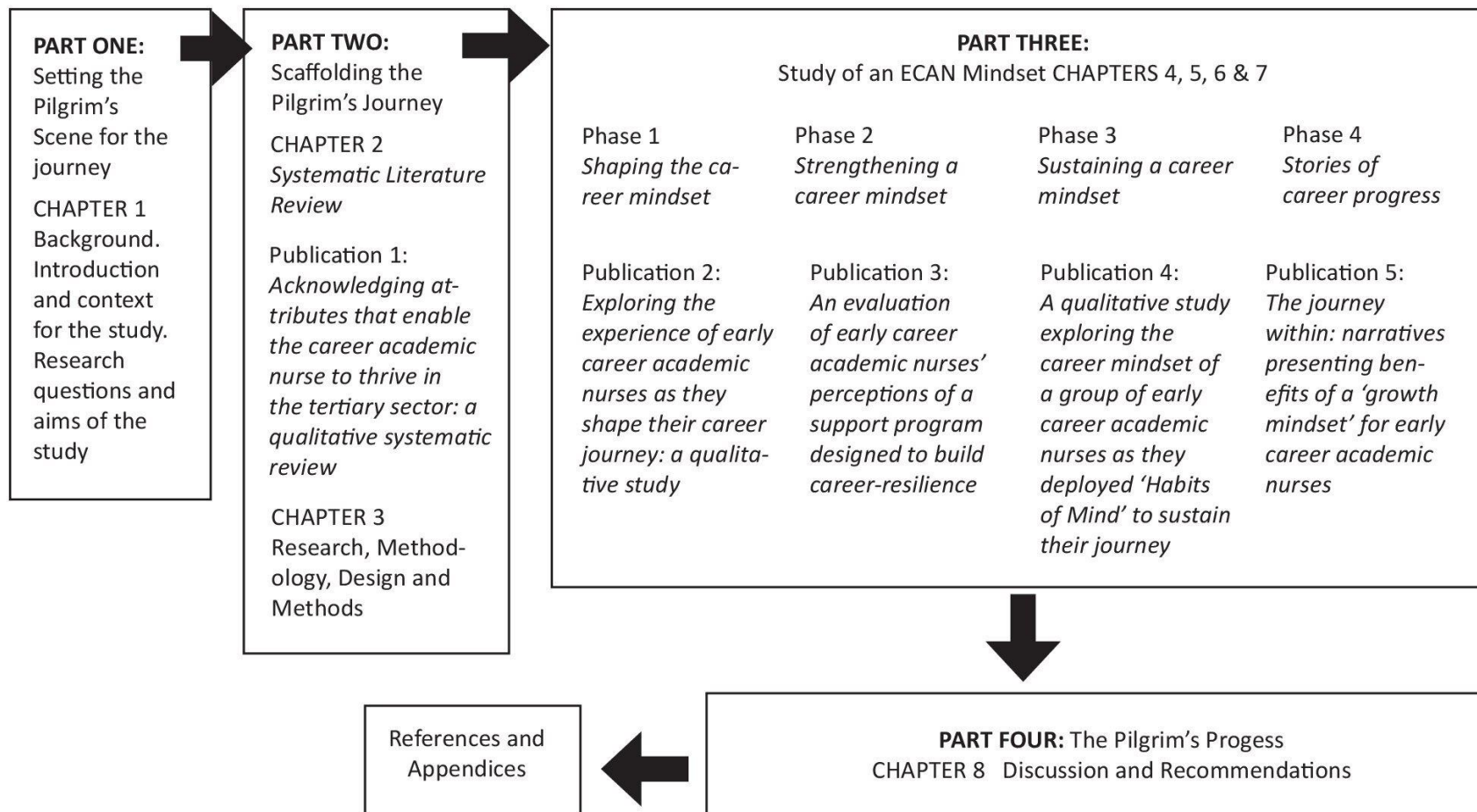
Evaluation of the literature on factors that influence career growth, and consideration of the study's aims and research questions, determined that a longitudinal qualitative descriptive design was appropriate. I expected that it would allow me to capture the voices of the ECANs who shared their experiences of navigating their careers, appreciate the nuances in their accounts, and characterise the mindsets that supported and sustained their career growth.

Eleven ECANs volunteered to participate in the first phase of the study, with nine of those taking part in phases two to four. Twenty-nine semi-structured, in-depth individual interviews were undertaken during the three-year study. Full details of the study design are provided in Chapter 3.

1.8 Thesis structure

The thesis is presented as a compilation of chapters and publications. The findings are presented in four published papers, with a fifth in development (Chapter 7). The study was conducted in four phases, as outlined in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1:
Flow chart of the thesis



*I penned it down, until at last it came to be, for length and breadth, the bigness which you see
[John Bunyan, The Pilgrim's Progress, Part 1, The Authors Apology for the book, Lines 32-34].*

PART ONE: SETTING THE SCENE FOR THE PILGRIM'S JOURNEY

Chapter 1: Background

In Chapter 1, I give the reader a chronological account of the changing academic landscape in Australia over the 13 years since the release of the Bradley Report in 2008. The chapter then outlines the changes to academic staffing, before focusing on the challenges ECANs encounter when navigating their academic journeys.

PART TWO: SCAFFOLDING THE PILGRIM'S JOURNEY

Chapter 2: Systematic Literature Review

Chapter 2 presents a published systematic review of the literature on ECANs transitioning and adjusting to the higher education environment. It highlights the attributes that support their adjustment.

Refereed journal publication:

Wyllie, A., DiGiacomo, M., Davidson, P., Jackson, D. & Phillips, J., (2016). Acknowledging attributes that enable the career academic nurse to thrive in the tertiary education sector: A qualitative systematic review. *Nurse Education Today*. 45, 212-218.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2016.08.010>

Chapter 3: Methodology, Design and Methods(Wyllie, DiGiacomo, Jackson, Davidson, & Phillips, 2016)

Chapter 3 provides the philosophical and theoretical framework for the research, along with details of the methods used in the four-phase longitudinal qualitative descriptive study.

PART THREE: STUDY OF A CAREER MINDSET

Chapter 4: Phase 1, shaping the career mindset

Chapter 4 reports the published findings from phase 1 of the study. Eleven ECANs were interviewed to explore their experiences and how they met the challenges and shifting needs of their journey. The findings also assisted in finalising the customised reflective program planned for phase 2.

Refereed journal publication:

Wyllie, A., Levett-Jones, T., DiGiacomo, M. & Davidson, P., (2019). Exploring the experiences of early career academic nurses as they shape their career journey: A qualitative study. *Nurse Education Today*. 76, 68-72. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2019.01.021>

Chapter 5: Phase 2, strengthening a career mindset

Chapter 5 outlines the three-month Program for Early-Career Academic Nurses (PECAN), an educational initiative designed and implemented with the aim of giving ECANs the skills to strengthen their career mindsets. I evaluated PECAN and the extent to which it influenced the ECANs' career journeys. Findings from the evaluation are provided in the publication cited below, and were presented at two academic nursing conferences.

Refereed journal publication and conference papers:

Wyllie, A., Levett-Jones, T., DiGiacomo, M. & Davidson, P., (2020). An evaluation of early career academic nurses' perceptions of a support program designed to build career-resilience. *Nurse Education in Practice*. 48, October 2020. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2020.102883>

Conference abstracts are available in Appendix 1.

Wyllie, A. Levett-Jones, T. DiGiacomo, M. & Davidson, P. (2018). A REAL orientation: a program designed to give early career academic nurses career confidence, *NNEC 17th National Nurses Education Conference: Changing worlds*, May 1-4, 2018 Melbourne.

Wyllie, A. Levett-Jones, T. DiGiacomo, M, & Davidson, P. (2018), P-ECAN – designing a Program to maximise career planning for Early Career Academic Nurses, *NETNEP 2018 – 7th International Nurse Education Conference*, May 6-9, 2018, Banff, Canada.

Chapter 6: Phase 3, sustaining a career mindset

Building a career can be a lengthy, convoluted and complex process. Success is predicated to a large extent on a career mindset that allows the individual to meet the inherent challenges of, and sustain their career growth in, the complex academic environment. In Chapter 6, the published findings from the third set of interviews describe the impact of intellectual habits on the ECANs' ongoing career mindsets.

Refereed journal publication:

Wyllie, A., Levett-Jones, T., DiGiacomo, M., Davidson, P. A qualitative study exploring habits of mind of a group of early career academic nurses as they sharpen their career mindset to sustain their journey, *Nursing Education in Practice*.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2021.103149>

Chapter 7: Phase 4, stories of career progress

Growth is an important part of the academic journey. In Chapter 7, snapshots of individual stories are used to convey the impact of a growth mindset on the ECANs' progress. The snapshots also offer advice for those taking the journey or teaching ECANs. The chapter concludes with an introduction to Chapter 8.

PART FOUR: THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS**Chapter 8:** Discussion, Conclusions, Recommendations and Future Directions

This chapter revisits the study's primary aim and research question and its findings. It then provides a discussion of the implications of the findings. I consider the study's limitations and present my conclusions. The chapter ends with recommendations for educational providers and possible directions for future research into the support, facilitation and education of ECANs who aspire to an academic career.

PART TWO: SCAFFOLDING THE PILGRIM'S JOURNEY

CHAPTER 2: SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

To go back is nothing but death; to go forward is fear of death, and life everlasting beyond it. I will yet go forward.

John Bunyan, *A Pilgrim's Progress* Part 1, par. 216.

Chapter 2 presents a systematic literature review in which I synthesised and critically appraised empirical evidence to underpin my study of ECANs' career mindsets. The chapter begins with a rationale for the review, before presenting its aims, impact, key findings and the published paper.

Refereed journal publication:

Wyllie, A., DiGiacomo, M., Davidson, P., Jackson, D. & Phillips, J. (2016). Acknowledging attributes that enable the career academic nurse to thrive in the tertiary education sector: A qualitative systematic review. *Nurse Education Today*. 45, 212-218.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2016.08.010>

2.1 The rationale for the review

Chapter 1 outlined the major changes to academic staffing in the Australian higher education sector over the last 13 years since the Bradley Report and how they influenced those who chose to pursue an academic career. The challenges encountered by ECANs who seek to negotiate the complex and dynamic nature of academia were then described. Chapter 1 demonstrates that ECANs require a deeper understanding of the attitudes and abilities that enable adjustment to academia and the career journey that follows. Like Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress* (Shackford, 1916, p. 653), the ECANs in my study were often unaware of the complex, demanding and convoluted journey ahead and were not prepared for the challenges. Although career success is rarely achieved without some setbacks, having the right attributes can allow obstacles and mistakes to be viewed in a positive light – as hurdles rather than failures. Thus, a review of the contemporary literature on the career mindset and abilities needed by ECANs was warranted. The specific aim of the systematic review was to provide a detailed account of the attributes necessary to optimise ECANs' career development.

2.2 Key findings from the review

The systematic review highlighted that for many ECANs, the transition into academia was hampered by feelings of uncertainty, role confusion and anxiety that caused them to struggle to engage successfully with their careers and their colleagues. Coping took time and required a great deal of trial, error and misdirection. Three abilities were identified as important to career success: adaptability, support-seeking and resilience.

2.3 The impact of the published review

At the time of thesis submission, this review had been cited four times and gained attention on social media including Twitter, Mendeley and Facebook. The Altmetric Attention Score for the review is 31, which is in the top 5% of all research outputs tracked. It has been tweeted 49 times by 49 tweeters in seven countries, with an upper bound of 95,484 followers <https://www.altmetric.com/details/11867001>.

2.4 Acknowledging attributes that enable the career academic nurse to thrive in the tertiary education sector: A qualitative systematic review

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Review

Acknowledging attributes that enable the career academic nurse to thrive in the tertiary education sector: A qualitative systematic review



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ABSTRACT

Objective: To optimise the career development in early career academic nurses by providing an overview of the attributes necessary for success.

Background: Evidence of early prospective career planning is necessary to optimise success in the tertiary sector. This is particularly important for nurse academics given the profession's later entry into academia, the ageing nursing workforce and the continuing global shortage of nurses.

Design: A qualitative systematic review.

Methods: Academic Search Complete, CINAHL, Medline, ERIC, Professional Development Collection and Google Scholar databases were searched; resulting in the inclusion of nine qualitative nurse-only focussed studies published between 2004 and 2014. The studies were critically appraised and the data thematically analysed.

Results: Three abilities were identified as important to the early career academic nurse: a willingness to adapt to change, an intention to pursue support and embodying resilience. These abilities give rise to attributes that are recommended as key to successful academic career development for those employed on a continuing academic basis.

Conclusions: The capacity to rely on one's own capabilities is becoming seen as increasingly important. It is proposed that recognition of these attributes, their skilful application and monitoring outlined in the review are recommended for a successful career in academia.

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CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, DESIGN AND METHODS

After first drinking at the spring for refreshment, Christian commences to climb the steep and high hill, self-motivating and urging himself on to overcome the difficulty.

John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Part 1, Par. 211.

The previous chapter contains a critical appraisal of the literature related to the career challenges encountered by ECANs and the attributes required to optimise a career mindset. Major challenges were identified with respect to role adjustment and career management. The literature review indicated that more evidence is needed on the type of support best given to ECANs in order for them to prosper. The overall aim of the study was to critically examine the career mindsets of a cohort of ECANs as they progressed through their careers. In particular, I sought to explore the experiences that shaped and strengthened their career mindsets and the personal qualities that sustained them. This chapter gives an account of the research methodology, design and methods used to achieve this aim.

3.1 Methodology and design

Section 3 offers details of the chosen qualitative research design, its interpretive paradigm and the constructivist framework used to support the study.

3.1.1 Qualitative descriptive approach

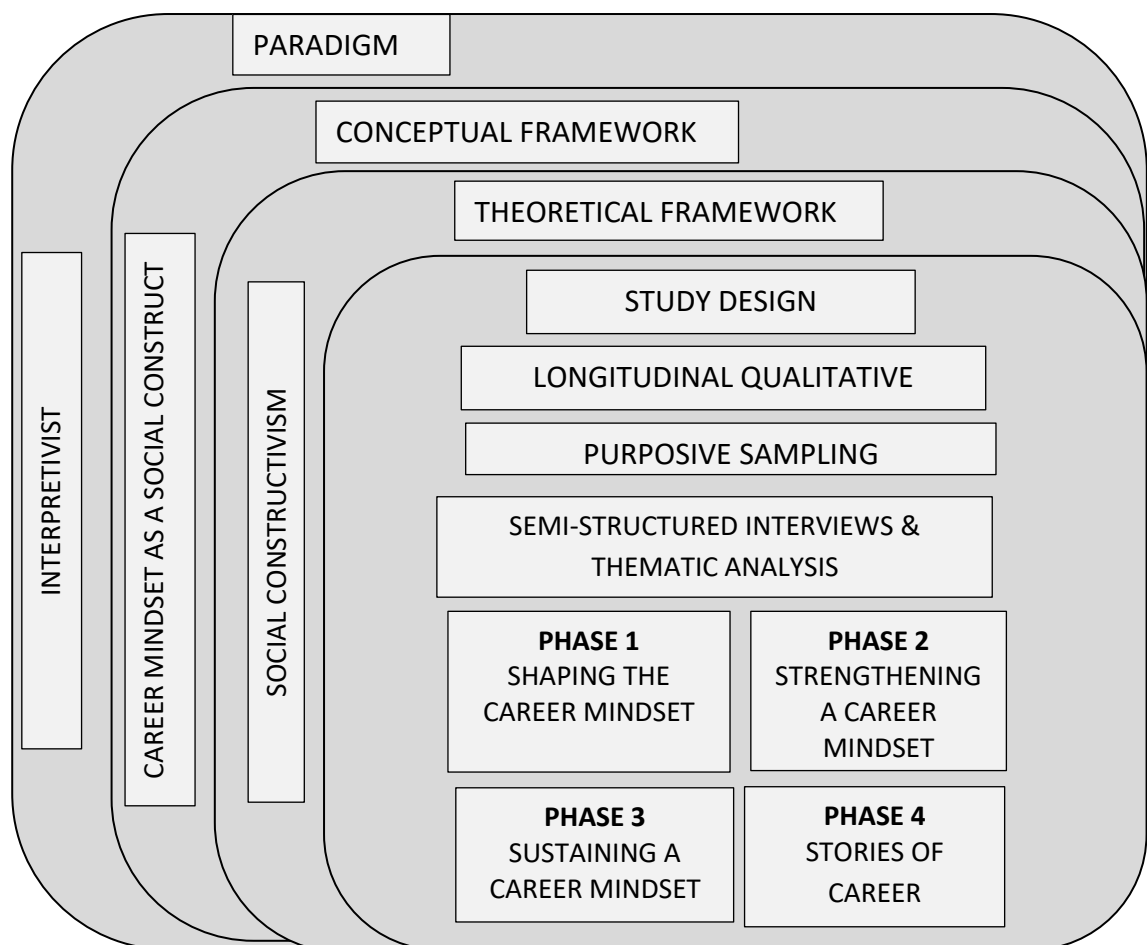
In this study a qualitative descriptive approach was deemed appropriate, for several reasons. I sought primarily to explore questions of 'how' and 'what' rather than 'how many' (Bradshaw, Atkinson, & Doody, 2017). Sandelowski (2000) suggested that 'how' and 'what' questions allow participants to describe the experiences from their perspectives and to provide context (Korstjens & Moser, 2017). A secondary reason was that a qualitative research approach provided opportunities to capture the realities of the ECANs' experiences and the possibility of '*illuminat[ing] phenomena and disclos[ing] previously unnoticed or overlooked experiences*' (Kent & McCormack, 2007, p. 108). In addition, the realities of the ECANs' understanding of their career-building experiences in their natural setting was of fundamental interest to me.

Data collection and sampling require close attention in qualitative descriptive studies in order to ensure that rich data are collected and for findings to be considered transferrable to similar

contexts (Bradshaw et al., 2017). My study therefore targeted ECANs who were believed to have an interest in, and expectations of building a career. The study used various ways of collecting data recommended by Patton (2014), including in-depth, semi-structured interviews, direct observations, reflections (refer to Keeping a journal 3.4). This multi-source approach gave me the ability to enter into the inner world of the participants and to explore their experiences in depth and in context (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Further, collecting data at multiple time points enhanced the richness of the data available to be analysed (Mertens, 2014), and the utility of the findings (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2010).

More specific information on the methods used in this study can be found in section 3.3. The next sections in this chapter outlines the research paradigm, conceptual framework, theoretical framework and design chosen for the study. Figure 3.1 below illustrates how the elements of the study’s methodology and design mesh.

Figure 3.1. The qualitative research design



3.1.2 Interpretive paradigm

A paradigm has been likened to a model of understanding. It comes with, as Levers (2013, p. 3) states, '*its own set of assumptions or cluster of beliefs*' that influences what should be studied, how it should be studied, and how results should be interpreted. In other words, a paradigm is influenced by the questions of human knowing and existence, or epistemology and ontology. Epistemology refers to the study of how we can know about reality and how we think about that knowledge (Spencer, Pryce, & Walsh, 2014). There are three main epistemologies: first, the belief that knowledge can be measured using reliable measures and tools; secondly, the belief that knowledge needs to be interpreted to discover its underlying meaning; and third, the belief that knowledge should be examined using the best tools for the purpose (Bradshaw et al., 2017). The focus of this study and my intent was to gain a deep understanding of the participants' perspectives and knowledge about what a career mindset meant to them, as well as the effects that some of the constructions of a career mindset had on them. The approach taken, a qualitative study with an interactive program and interviews, allows for a multi-source approach and one where the participants can give free-ranging perspectives about their career building.

According to Burr (2015, p. 104) '*ontology is the study of being and existence in the world*'. It raises questions about the nature of reality and the human being (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), and it is the ontological position that helps researchers recognise their level of certainty about the nature and existence of the phenomena that they are exploring or examining. Debate about epistemologies and ontologies have tended to be centred on three views: that there is a single reality, a group of realities, or that reality is constantly being negotiated and interpreted (Spencer et al., 2014). The ontological position of this research is that a career mindset is constructed through experiences over time and that each construction builds opportunities for the ECAN and their journey. Everyday conversations are gathered and aligned with ideas, behaviours and objects to transform new knowledge. Thus, the constructions of a career mindset for ECANs are influenced by people and their interactions.

In accepting that the above epistemological and ontological positions were a solid foundation for the qualitative study, an interpretive paradigm was adopted. The interpretive paradigm is particularly relevant to qualitative research because it explores how people interpret, provide

meanings about, and understand, the world around them (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2013). Interpretivists believe there is no specific pathway to knowledge, rather, that knowledge is created by people's interpretations, and so reflective of both the human experience and the context. People cannot separate themselves from what they know; it is not all about truth, prediction and control, but people develop their meanings and understandings of different concepts through social interactions (Burr, 2015).

By also accepting that the research participants have their own realities, I assumed that more than one factor influenced the ECANs' construction of a career mindset as it was described to me. An interpretive paradigm was vital to this research, because it enabled me to better understand the ECANs' experiences of careers in academia, experiences that had consequences for their development and potential to affect career building. The ECANs' career-building experiences were influenced by both their actions and their interactions with members of the faculty, for example mentors and colleagues.

Application of the interpretive paradigm enabled me to look also at the research questions from several dimensions, and carefully analyse and interpret the ECANs' narratives in their own socio-cultural context (Frost, 2021, p. 45). It suited the qualitative descriptive approach used in writing, discussing and the shaping of ideas throughout the research.

I aimed to explore participants' constructions of a career mindset. It was through engaging with the data that I realised that there were many ways in which the participants thought about, and reacted to, understandings of what a career meant to them. I also realised that, in many ways, careers are socially constructed and that an interpretive research paradigm was appropriate because this approach draws on the everyday meanings of individuals. Interpretive research also aligns with the theory of social constructivism, because it is embedded in the context of fluid social interactions and recognises that individuals create meanings and make sense of their world through those social interactions in context (Picardi & Masick, 2013).

In summary, the interpretive paradigm allowed me to focus, not only on ECANs' experiences and knowledge of a career mindset, but on how they understood the world around them (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2013). Through engaging with the qualitative data in this study, I came to understand the ECANs' differing journeys, to appreciate the learning pathways open

to and taken by the ECANs, and to acknowledge the relevance of social constructivism to career satisfaction and success. The theory of social constructivism is discussed in detail in Section 3.1.4.

3.1.3 Conceptual framework

According to Farley-Ripple, May, Karpyn, Tilley, and McDonough (2018) a conceptual framework is a scaffold that directs and provides coherence for the research. It creates connections between the phenomenon, theoretical perspectives, and design (Mertens, 2014) and in qualitative research, Bradshaw et al. (2017) recommends that the scaffold be flexible to highlight the conclusions being drawn from the findings. My starting point for a discussion of the scaffold is the notion of career as being important and holding a large part of the meaning for the ECANs' journey. In particular the phenomenon to be studied is the ECANs career mindset; which in recent literature is said to hold promise as a valuable asset toward self-direction and career progress (Heslin, Keating, & Minbashian, 2019).

The idea of a career and its importance to our lives is a modern concept. According to Inkson, Dries, and Arnold (2007), careers are viewed as important not only for the satisfaction they bring but because they give an identity to the individual and meaning to the environment in which they are employed. Some scholars even viewing it as not only having meaning for our lives but for our social world; and when viewing a career through a social lens, it can be conceptualised as a form or structure conceived by the social world or society (Hartung & Subich, 2011) and allows for a career to be put into action by the individuals themselves (Hoekstra, 2011).

In Western societies, careers are not predetermined by tradition; people are generally free to build a career according to their interests, talents and potential (Hoekstra, 2011). This is not, however, to suggest that individuals always have free rein in what they want or are able to achieve in their careers, rather to acknowledge that people through their personal actions are part of a dynamic environment where there can be growth or constraints to career building (Simons, Lathlean, & Squire, 2008). Constraints on career building can be environmental or physical conditions. Individual constraints can be personal attributes, such as temperament, personality or attitudes (Caspi, Roberts, & Shiner, 2005). Beyond these factors, however, individuals in the workplace have the ability to overcome these constraints through the

building of strong goals and relevant individual plans (Guan, Arthur, Khapova, Hall, & Lord, 2019).

Meaningful career building has the need for a flexible framework that can be adaptable yet offers an uncompromising view when it comes to career development. A mindset is said to be grounded in our experiences, education and culture and form thoughts which establish attitudes (Kundi, Hollet-Haudebert, & Peterson, 2021). Those thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes lead to certain actions and with those actions you have experiences and those experiences gives our mind new information to process. According to Dweck (2008) there are two types of mindset, a fixed and a growth. A growth mindset could be a valuable asset for the ECANs to foster as it would allow them to build a career mindset that has a belief in oneself and one where they look beyond their current career status and know that they can make changes (Dweck & Yeager, 2019).

For scholars Inkson et al. (2007), who have written widely on career and identity a clear sense of 'who you are' and 'what you are capable of' makes it easier to connect with your career building and effective career progress. Possessing a sound mindset can assist with the challenges that building and implementation present (Dweck & Yeager, 2019) and may offer some assistance to the ECANs.

In my study, a career mindset has been viewed as a connection with the academic positions which the ECANs held, the challenges that they faced and the progress that they sought.

3.1.4 Social Constructivism framework

A constructivist theory has two main branches: social constructionism and social constructivism. Both branches focus on the processes of understanding and addressing social change in a postmodern society (Creswell & Poth, 2016) and both hold views that knowledge and reality are subjective (Ültanir, 2012). It is in the construction of these realities where the branches differ (Sommers-Flanagan & Sommers-Flanagan, 2018). Constructionists focus on what is occurring 'between' people and as they interact to create realities in the world. Constructivists believe that knowledge and reality are constructed 'within' individuals as they relate to society and as such, constructivism is a more useful theoretical framework for this qualitative research, given its focus on exploring the mindset ECANs.

There is substantial scholarly discussion about social constructivism and its usefulness to qualitative research. Mutch (2006) describes it as a theory that takes '*a critical stance towards taken-for granted knowledge*' (p. 18). Burr (2015) suggested that social constructivism is a critical examination of ourselves and how the world is being understood through our involvement and interaction with others. Boyland (2019) argued that social constructivism has no fixed definition; instead, it changes over time with experience, as knowledge becomes socially constructed by people and their contexts. In turn, this knowledge influences people's practices and how they understand the ways in which their environment operates and constructs meaning. To Weinberg (2014), people are unaware, most of the time, of the constructed nature of these meanings.

My interest in the theory is to understand the ways in which knowledge is situated and embedded in cultural values and practices; and to reveal insights on how the individual ECANs interact with the world, in a broad sense and in organisations specifically. In both these environments according to (Hosking & McNamee, 2006), meanings are socially constructed, developed and made significant via the coordination of people in their various encounters; therefore, they are always fluid and dynamic (Gergen & Gergen, 2018). An important element of this theory is the assumption that human beings rationalise their experience by creating a model of the social world and the way that it functions in everyday life (Leeds-Hurwitz, 2009). This element has underpinned the examination and exploration of a variety of practices and experiences in the field of work and organisations (Gergen & Gergen, 2018). One of these practices is the focus on strengths and what is already working well, and this emphasis suited the direction of my study, because it sought to explore the ECANs' journey and the factors that led to and influenced their career building within a complex environment. In order to focus on the factors that were a positive influence on the ECANs career an Appreciative Inquiry approach was used in designing and implementing the research.

Appreciative inquiry is a strengths-based approach to research developed by Cooperrider in the late 80s as an alternative approach to traditional organisational development models (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2010). It distinguishes itself from other critical modes of inquiry by deliberately targeting positive assumptions about '*people, organisations and relationships*' (Ludema, Cooperrider, & Barrett, 2006, p. 10), and '*when tapped provides a sustainable source of positive energy for personal and organizational transformation*' (Ludema & Fry,

2008, p. 282). Further, appreciative inquiry makes an assumption that people will continue to have a positive transformation if they grasp and effectively make use of all opportunities (Ludema et al., 2006, p. 1). This mode of inquiry has a natural affiliation with social constructivism and constructivist learning (Kung, Giles, & Hagan, 2013) and as such, works in harmony with my overall study's theoretical framework of social constructivism.

By employing a social constructivist lens, I was able to study the ECANs' intimate reflections, interactions and experiences in an everyday reality of the workplace, and by doing so explore the less frequently told narratives of the nurse academic's career mindset. The resultant narratives focus on the ECANs' perspective of their own experiences in the construction of building their career, and the socially constructed meanings put on their experiences by others, giving significance to both identity and journey.

Another important point here, and one that further justifies the social constructivism bent of the study, is about the influence of an organisation on having and building a career. As mentioned earlier, the concept of career building is a modern one. Career growth can be seen nowadays as an individual's responsibility, but it is not a passive exercise, because external forces influence its development. Organisations invest in employees' careers because of the value their careers hold for them as well as for the individuals. As such, the making of the career can be viewed as a dual responsibility (Inkson et al., 2007). A vital part of this construction is engagement with fellow workers – in this case, fellow academics – and, for a social constructivist, this engagement has to be meaningful in order to facilitate growth. It then makes sense for the organisation to assist in building ECANs' career mindsets so that they can build a reputation for the organisation and the community.

Thus, from a social constructivist's point of view, human beings socially interact in every context (Burr, 2015) and people need to accept that understandings can change as new knowledge is constructed wherever people have the potential to share views, be supported and develop their career (Camargo-Borges & Rasera, 2013). referred to this process as 'doing' and 'growing' the career. A process where the focus is on people generating meaning together to create new organisational cultures by changing the conversation, putting people together to have dialogue and to co-create possibilities for action generating new possible realities.

3.2 The researcher's position

Proponents of qualitative research recognise that the researcher has a distinct relationship with study participants (Koch, 1994), with the longitudinal study design allowing time for an even closer relationship to develop over time (Hermanowicz, 2013). Macqueen and Patterson (2021) stated that this was beneficial for the researcher, because participants tend to become more honest and generous in their responses; however, it posed difficulties for me as a researcher. The relationship had the potential to prompt many differing aspects of social interaction, such as power imbalances, friendships and shared understandings (Råheim et al., 2016). I came to this study with two identities, that of my role as colleague in the faculty, which was familiar to the interviewees, and the other as researcher. This presented me with opportunities but also challenges, and I needed to clearly delineate my role as a researcher throughout the study and find ways of communicating my thoughts and actions (Macqueen & Patterson, 2021). One way of achieving this was reflection on and documentation of my 'insider' and 'outsider' spaces.

3.2.1 The insider space

The term 'insider researcher' is used for a researcher who has lived experience of the phenomena being studied (Berkovic, Ayton, Briggs, & Ackerman, 2020, p. 1). I am a professional academic, and had experienced many of the challenges encountered by the participating ECANs; I could therefore relate to their journey through '*language, and experiential base*' (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 58). According to Dwyer and Buckle (2009), as an insider, the doctoral candidate can use this lens in a positive way, because understanding the participants' language can foster trust, especially if the researcher has their respect. Moreover, the researcher's prior experience can help in understanding and critically interpreting the phenomena being explored. For example, understanding challenges that many of the ECANs discussed conversationally allowed me to give the participants a greater voice in what mattered to them as individuals but also understanding the language I could probe more deeply into their journey.

There are downsides to being an 'insider researcher'. For example, although this shared status can be very beneficial as it affords access, entry, and a common ground from which to begin the research, it has the potential to impede the research process as it progresses. At times

the ECANs made assumptions that I would know their experiences when I was wanting to focus on their particular journey. It occurred more frequently than I expected, and in my post-interview reflections wondered whether it was a way of deflecting the question.

Nevertheless, being an insider researcher taught me several valuable lessons.

3.2.2 The outsider space

In my role as an outsider, I observed the participants' personal journeys and recorded their views, as well as interpreted them against the research questions using a social constructivist lens. I had direct contact with the participants during interviews and as an observer in PECAN. In these spaces, I had to work out my membership role (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). I had encountered similar challenges to those being told by the participants. Although I had previous experience in conducting interviews and focus groups and felt equipped to facilitate the semi-structured interviews, creating an appropriate professional relationship was important, given the multiple interviews over time and my involvement as an observer in the PECAN collaboratories.

I commenced a reflective journal following the first interview, and maintained it until the end of the project. Entries were made following each interview and following each of the six collaboratory sessions in Phase 2 of the study. Links to the appropriate appendices to review examples follow in '*keeping a journal*' 3.4. Details of Phase 2 are given in Chapter 5.

On review of my first notes, I was overwhelmed by the evidence of trust placed in me by the participants and was more than ever determined to connect with the ECANs and help them to give voice to their journey. This involvement was not, I believe, detrimental to the study, and I learnt as the interviews and collaboratories progressed to remain outside their stories but still connected with them.

3.3 Methods

The method section offers specifics of the design including: setting, recruitment, data collection and analysis. It ends with an in-depth discussion of the ethics involved with the study.

3.3.1 Study design

According to Yin (2015), the research design refers to more than just a plan of action. It involves an overall strategy chosen to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring the researcher will effectively address the research problem; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data.

My study employed a four-phase longitudinal qualitative descriptive research design, driven by social constructivism. According to Calman, Brunton, and Molassiotis (2013), longitudinal qualitative studies are appropriate for answering '*qualitative questions about the lived experience*' (p. 1). Saldaña (2003) suggested that a phenomenon should be studied for a '*minimum of nine months*' (p. 4) in order for the research to be classified as a longitudinal qualitative study. My study meets that criterion, because the project involved scrutinising the career mindsets of a cohort of ECANs over three years. I sought to answer the following overarching research question:

What are the experiences that have shaped and strengthened Australian ECANs career mindsets and the personal qualities that sustained them?

The four phases and their related aims and sub questions were presented in 1.6, but are reiterated here for convenience. They are as follows.

Phase 1: Shaping the career mindset

Aim: To explore ECANs' experiences as they shape their careers.

Research question: How do ECANs approach the task of building a career and what are their experiences of navigating a career?

The findings from Phase 1 were incorporated into a customised reflective Program for ECANs (PECAN), which was implemented and evaluated in Phase 2.

Phase 2: Strengthening a career mindset

Aim: To implement and evaluate a customised program designed to facilitate ECANs' critical reflection on factors that were perceived to strengthen a career mindset.

Research question: How do ECANs describe the experiences of being a participant in the customised reflective program?

Phase 3: Sustaining a career mindset

Aim: To explore the qualities that sustained ECAN career mindsets.

Research question: What qualities assisted the ECANs to sustain their career mindsets?

Phase 4: Stories of career progress

Aim: To present individual ECANs stories of career progress.

Research question: What is the impact of a growth mindset on career progress for ECANs?

3.3.2 Setting

The setting for this study was a large metropolitan university in Sydney, Australia. One university site and one discipline were deemed appropriate for the study, because it was a large faculty of mostly nursing academics, allowing the ECANs to be studied in an authentic environment.

3.3.3 Recruitment

I took a purposive approach to recruitment. I sought nursing academics who were:

- employed in an ongoing full-time academic position;
- within seven years of commencing an academic role (allowing for career disruptions),
and
- at least one year into or having completed a PhD.

Recruitment for Phase 1 occurred over a two-month period between December 2016 and February 2017. Following ethics approval (Appendix 2), an office administrator emailed recruitment invitations (Appendix 3) to all of the ECANs in the faculty. The ECANs were asked to contact me if they wished to participate. A detailed information sheet (Appendix 4) and consent form (Appendix 5) were then provided to volunteers. Reminder emails were sent to potential participants one week before the first set of interviews was scheduled.

Following the first email, six ECANs responded, and after the reminder email another three agreed to participate. After discussion with my supervisors, we widened the recruitment by sending invitations to four ECANs who had resigned recently but who still met the inclusion criteria. Following approval of an ethics amendment, an email invitation was sent and two more ECANs agreed to participate. In total 11 ECANs were recruited, but two who had resigned only participated in the first interview (phase 1). The remaining nine ECANs were invited to join PECAN (phase 2 and 3).

In order to capture the realities of participants' experiences; to give clarity to previously unnoticed or overlooked experiences, and to enable the findings to be transferred to similar contexts, scholars have stressed the importance of paying close attention to the sampling frame and data collection processes (Marshall & Rossman, 2014). Targeting participants with requisite knowledge and experience is, for Bradshaw et al. (2017), fundamental to capturing the phenomenon under investigation comprehensively and thus accumulating rich data. (Patton, 2014) recommended the utilisation of various ways of collecting information, namely the use of written documents, direct observation and in-depth, open-ended interviews (p. 7). A multi-source approach to data collection offers qualitative researchers not only the opportunity to enter into the inner world of the participants, but to explore these experiences in depth, and in context, thus adding a cultural aspect to findings (Creswell & Poth, 2016). Further, collecting data at intervals in the study process enhances its richness (Mertens, 2014). More specific information on data collection is now given.

3.3.4 Data collection and interpretive procedures

Semi-structured interviews, observations and journalling were used to optimise exploration of the phenomena's complexity and to gain inside knowledge about how the participants experienced their career unfolding within the higher education environment. I interviewed ECANs at mutually convenient times and locations. All interviews were audio-taped and professionally transcribed by the same transcriber to aid consistency. Transcriptions were then verified by the principal researcher prior to analysis.

In order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and to describe the ECANs' mindsets at different stages of their journey, data were collected in three phases, as described below.

Phase 1 data collection

Aim: To explore ECANs' experiences as they shaped their career paths.

This first set of interviews was conducted over a three-month period (March–May 2017); they ranged from 60 to 90 minutes in duration. The interviews were designed to capture information about participants' experiences, expectations, values, knowledge and beliefs about their ECAN role, the support that they had received since commencing employment in academia, the skills and strategies they had acquired, and their plans for the future. Of the eleven ECANs who agreed to take part in the study (two males and nine females) seven had completed their PhD, two had a Master's in clinical nursing and one within a year of completing a PhD. The remaining ECAN had a Bachelor of Nursing with Honours and was enrolled into a PhD. Their ages ranged from 30 to 55 years of age (mean of 41 years) and everyone had been in full-time employment with the faculty between eleven months to six years. All were registered nurses had currency with AHPRA (Australian, Health Practitioner Registration Agency) and came to the ECAN position through varied nursing and managerial experiences.

Broad opening questions were used to prompt participants to reflect on their experiences of early employment, such as: *'How long have you been employed by the Faculty as an early-career academic nurse? Did you have an orientation?' 'Tell me about that orientation and what occurred?'* Full details of the interview questions can be found in Appendix 6. The data was analysed to identify themes, using the six-phase approach of Braun et al. (2017). This process provides a rich and detailed account of data (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017).

I read transcripts multiple times to become familiar with the data and make notes about career behaviours, values and support strategies in order to form initial ideas. Individual responses to questions were arranged systematically on a spreadsheet with a separate cell for each response. Responses were colour-coded to match the individual responses and new codes recorded as they were identified. Codes were arranged into subthemes and potential overarching themes. Significance was awarded to codes that reflected the research questions and were cited frequently (Clarke, Braun, & Hayfield, 2015). A thematic map followed, illustrating the connecting subthemes and four major themes. Substantial time was given to reviewing all transcripts and ensuring all data were coded before the four major themes were

finalised. To complete the process, I wrote up the analysis using quotes to support my findings.

Phase 2 data collection

Aim: To implement and evaluate PECAN, a customised reflective program designed to prompt ECANs to critically reflect on qualities that assisted their career journeys.

As part of the PECAN, face-to-face collaboratories were held at regular intervals. The term 'collaboratory' describes an open space allowing creative processes and where a group of people could work together to generate solutions to complex problems. The collaboratory concept is discussed in detail in Chapter 5, Phase 2, 5.2.

The second set of data collection involved interviews of approximately 60 minutes in duration, and took place in March–May 2018, shortly after the sixth PECAN collaboratory. Nine of the original eleven, took part in phase 2. Two of the participants in phase 1 had left full-time employment and were no longer eligible for the study. The interviews sought to collect participants' views on the value of the program and the extent to which the collaboratories engaged, enhanced or reinforced critical thinking and a career growth mindset. The Interview questions are provided in Appendix 7.

The data were thematically analysed as in Phase 1 using Braun et al. (2017) six-phase approach.

Phase 3 data collection

Aim: To explore the qualities that sustained ECAN career mindsets.

The third phase of data collection took place in September–November 2018. The interviews, which were 50–60 minutes long, focused on the extent to which the ECANs had found PECAN valuable in sustaining a career mindset (Appendix 8). The nine participants were the same as those who had participated in phase 2. The data were analysed thematically, as described for phases 1 and 2 above.

Data saturation was achieved in Phases 1-3 when the ECANs at each interview had no new feedback about the program (Low, 2019) and theme saturation was realised '*based on the*

extent of theme development and the importance these data' (Hennink, Kaiser, & Marconi, 2017, p. 593). Information can also be found in individual publications.

Phase 4 stories of career progress

Aim: To present individual ECANs stories of career progress.

In Phase 4, I undertook secondary analysis of the amalgamated qualitative data from the previous three phases to portray the ECANs' career achievements over the three-year period. Snapshots of individual stories were used to convey stories of the impact of a *growth mindset* on career progress. All three sets of interview data were read and reread until the principal researcher had obtained full understanding of the individuals perspectives on their career journeys thus far (Saunders et al., 2018).

3.4 Keeping a journal

The notion of journaling as a means of keeping records during research is widely accepted (Ortlipp, 2008). During this research, my journal served two purposes: as a memory prompt to capture reflections during data analysis (Kwasnicka, Dombrowski, White, & Sniehotta, 2015), and to reflect on my role in the interviews.

I recorded written observations and reflections immediately following the interviews and included notes on the style of interview, rapport and improvements for the next interview (Appendix 9 for an example). I discussed these notes with supervisors. For quality assurance, my supervisor and I reviewed my conduct of the first interview, asking questions such as:

- Was my interview technique satisfactory?
- Was I pushing an agenda or frame of reference?
- Were the questions leading or biased?
- Were the questions clear? Did I interrupt?

I also took observational notes during the PECAN collaboratories, and these were added to my reflective journal following each session (Appendix 10 for an example). These notes and reflections were used as prompts for the second set of interviews and to capture examples of critical collegial interactions during the collaboratories.

3.5 Data analysis and interpretation

As noted earlier, data from all phases were analysed by myself as lead researcher using Braun et al. (2017) six-phase process and verified by supervisors. This approach has its roots in psychology, and has become popular due to its clarity and that it allows researchers to stay close to the data and represent the voice of the participants authentically (Terry, Hayfield, Clarke, & Braun, 2017). Each interview was coded separately by line and session. Transcripts were analysed for themes, using standard thematic analysis techniques; the constructed themes helped me to answer my research questions.

The steps, as used in my study, are as follows.

1. Data familiarisation – scrutinising transcripts for accuracy while listening to the audiotapes. All transcripts are read and reread several times, with points of interest (e.g. behaviours, activities, values and support) noted.
2. Initial codes are applied to features in the data relevant to the research questions. Then, every data extract is collated and colour coded.
3. Recurring patterns (themes) in the data are identified.
4. The themes are reviewed for accuracy.
5. Detailed reanalysis of each theme is carried out.
6. Themes are created and named so to give rise to explaining the phenomena under investigation.

Details of how the interviews from Phases, 2 and 3 were analysed, along with key findings, can be found in the publications included in Chapters 4, 5 and 6.

3.6 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness, relies on rigour and is a vital part of qualitative research. Rigour refers to the credibility, fittingness, dependability and confirmability of the study's research processes (Koch, 1994), resulting in high-quality, authentic and truthful findings, and trust – or confidence – in the results (Connelly, 2016).

3.6.1 Credibility

Credibility is achieved in a qualitative study when it presents *'faithful descriptions or interpretations of a human experience that the people having that experience recognise it... as their own'* (Sandelowski, 1986, p. 30). In this study credibility was established in four ways. Firstly, by using an iterative process in which data were read multiple times and analysed with increasing immersion and familiarity (Sandelowski & Leeman, 2012). While reading the data, I made notes on the transcripts and my supervisors reviewed them for accuracy. Feedback from my supervisors enabled me to look more deeply into the data. Secondly, I kept a reflective journal to write about the *'research spaces'* (Ortlipp, 2008), that is, my thoughts and reflections on personal experiences and the research process (Koch, 1994). Thirdly, I maintained close attention to application of the theory of social constructivism when interpreting the data (Flick, 2018). Fourthly, I gave the participants copies of their interview transcripts for comment and member checking (Carlson, 2010).

3.6.2 Fittingness

(Koch, 1994) described fittingness as the outcome of ensuring that *'the original context [is] described adequately so that a judgement of transferability can be made by readers'* (p. 977). To ensure a *'fit'* for this qualitative study, I provide detailed explanations of the context, the times, and the sites in which the research was conducted. Secondly, I purposively recruited the ECAN sample, and the study occurred in a setting familiar to participants, that is, a *'natural setting'* (Mertens, 2014, p. 256). Through using these approaches, I anticipated that the findings would be relevant and of benefit to future ECANs. My third approach to achieving fittingness was proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2018), who argue that fittingness is about ensuring the *'truth, value and applicability of the qualitative study'* and there In other words, can the findings of the study *'fit'* outside this particular study. In this study, there was checking for representativeness of the data and bias which are two important aspects of fittingness. The third was one relates to *'fit'* of the study During the final collaboratory, the participants confirmed that they could relate to the findings – that they had *'meaning and applicability to their own experiences'* (Sandelowski, 1986, p. 35), supporting my claim of fittingness.

3.6.3 Dependability

The research process was implemented as proposed originally, and an audit trail was used when collecting and analysing data. A systematic detailed spreadsheet with individual colour-coded responses to questions arranged in separate cells was shared with supervisors. The spreadsheet evolved over time as the themes were merged. I discussed the themes regularly with my supervisors, and kept notes of these meetings that I referred to in later analysis. I acted consistently with established protocols for collecting information from differing sources to ensure maximum confidence in the resultant information (Mertens, 2012).

Dependability was maximised by scrutinising the reflective journal entries as the data was reviewed. Feedback to and from my supervisors enhanced the reliability of findings and the overall process of the study. Debriefing sessions occurred after the preparation of research methods and instruments, as well as at the end of each phase of data gathering. This helped to ensure the reliability of data. Finally, my reflexive analysis of research activities and overlapping data collection methods provided rich descriptions that responded to the research question. An example of the journal log appears in Appendix 8.

3.6.4 Confirmability

According to (Koch, 1994) confirmability requires one to give evidence of the way in which interpretations have been arrived at via the inquiry. Koch calls this an 'audit trail' (Koch, 1994, p. 977). For Guba and Lincoln (1989), confirmability is established when credibility, transferability and dependability are achieved, and for Huberman and Miles (2002) when the researcher can be confident that they have addressed the following question: *'are the study's procedures described so explicitly that we can follow the sequence from initial question to conclusion?'* (p. 272). My study I believe met all of the criteria outlined above that is concerned with confirmability.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Throughout the study, the ethical procedures and processes specified by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC, 2019) were strictly followed. The NHMRC guidelines include respect for autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice (NHMRC, 2019). These ethical principles are discussed below.

3.7.1 Respect for autonomy

Autonomy is commonly described as the right to self-determination (Niemic, Ryan, & Deci, 2010). If autonomy is observed, the probability of doing good, and reducing harm is achieved (Varkey, 2021). To ensure that the ethical principle of autonomy was maintained in this study, a professional staff member not involved in the project contacted all eligible ECANs with details of the study, thus giving the ECANs the choice to participate or not without any sense of coercion. The email asked volunteers to contact me as the lead researcher, thus giving them control over their participation.

In the reporting of the data, I replaced names with non-gendered pseudonyms in order to retain the human qualities of the text. However, the participants were not anonymous because I was their faculty colleague, and had known them all before the study began. Although I was not the participants' line manager, I was the Director of Studies and responsible for ensuring the quality of the undergraduate nursing program in which the majority of the ECANs taught. Before signing the consent form, all potential participants knew of my role as both an academic and a researcher, and asserted that they were willing to participate nonetheless.

Prior to their first interview, participants were asked to review the information sheet (Appendix 3) and provide written consent (Appendix 4). Informed consent was given voluntarily, without influence based on threats, coercion or deception. Participants were competent to give consent and understood the nature of the research and the consequences associated with their decision. Assurances were given at this time that interview transcripts and subsequent presentations or publications would not contain identifying features. In addition, I reminded the participants that they could leave the study at any time without negative consequences.

All interviews were conducted individually to allow participants to freely express their views. They were held at a quiet, comfortable and convenient on-campus venue, away from academic offices, to minimise work-related disruptions and maximise privacy. Nonetheless, one of the interviews was interrupted; I stopped the tape and asked the interviewee if they wanted to adjourn. The offer was declined, and the interview continued successfully.

The interviews were digitally recorded. The audio-tape was a high-density recorder and once the interviews were downloaded to the lead researcher's computer hard drive, the sound card was erased. Once the interview tapes were transcribed, participants were given the opportunity to review and amend as they saw fit.

All de-identified data was stored securely for five years in a locked cupboard, within a locked office, and on a password-protected computer accessible only to me (NHMRC, 2019). Personal data linking the participant's identifying information was kept on a separate secure drive accessible only to me. The data collected was used only for my immediate research purposes, including publications and related presentations. Only deidentified, aggregated data have been and will be published. Data identifying participants will be destroyed by means of shredding/file destruction five years from the date of collection.

All efforts were made to ensure confidentiality during the PECAN collaboratories was discussed at the beginning of each collaboratory; all of the participants stated verbally that they trusted that confidences would be kept, and confirmed that they understood the terms on which they were involved in the project. The collaboratories were not tape-recorded or video-recorded, and the participants chose what they disclosed during the sessions. With the participants' permission and informed consent, I took handwritten notes to inform my journal and the post-program interviews (phase 2 of the research), employing pseudonyms to conceal identities.

3.7.2 Beneficence

It was made clear to participants that any benefits derived from PECAN were solely the results of their own efforts and collaboration with group members. There would be no gains or workplace rewards as a result of participation.

3.7.3 Justice

Qualitative research contributes to social justice when it promotes fairness (Shaw, 2003). To Lyons et al. (2013), justice can be *'enacted when researchers are conscious and deliberate about these intentions'* (p. 11) and avoid the use of power for their own gains.

Power plays a pivotal role in the attainment of justice. What is fair or just is very often decided by those who hold power. I hold a Master's Degree in Bioethics, and this training made me particularly alert to the researcher–participant power imbalance throughout the study. For this reason, I used a framework proposed by Karnieli-Miller, Strier, and Pessach (2009) that allows viewing the power relations across stages of the research process (see Table 3.1). The researcher needs to be aware of the power relations and work toward a balance of power during involvement with participants.

3.8 Summary and next steps

This chapter describes the research methodology, design and methods used to address the aim of this study, that is, to critically examine the career mindsets of a cohort of ECANs as they progressed through their careers. The interpretive paradigm was discussed as a way of thoughtfully exploring, analysing and interpreting the ECANs' narratives in their own socio-cultural context (Frost, 2021, p. 45). Social constructivism was then presented as a lens for exploring factors that build an effective and sustaining career mindset that can facilitate ECANs' navigation of the academic environment.

Chapter 4 focuses on the ECANs' attitudes to their career journey. The metaphor of a journey is used to convey that it is not only the destination, but the ECANs' expedition and mindset that influence their career growth. A journey metaphor allows the obstacles and challenges encountered along the way, and the travellers involved, to be part of the unfolding experience. Most importantly, it is hoped that the journey metaphor illustrates the ECANs' growing awareness of the meaning of their experiences so that others can learn from them.

Table 3.1. Power imbalances during the research

Stages during research study	Focus	<u>Who</u> holds power?	How addressed in this study
Recruitment	Participants	Resides with the <u>researchers</u> who make decisions about the research process	Voluntary informed consent offered the participants control over their involvement and the choice of disclosing information.
Data collection	Data collection process	Researchers determined the questions but required <u>participants</u> to be willing to share their stories.	I engaged in reflexive practice by journaling.
		Participants are vulnerable when sharing their stories.	If the participants were to become distressed I would offer details of the university counselling service.
Data analysis	Data analysis process	The stories are being recast – the power is with the <u>researcher</u> .	During interviews and collaboratories I sought confirmation or to clarify interpretations of participants' stories. Member checking of interview transcripts allowed participants to confirm or correct. Confidentiality of data was maintained at all times.

Adapted from: (Karnieli-Miller et al., 2009)

PART THREE: STUDY OF AN ECAN MINDSET

CHAPTER 4: PHASE 1 – SHAPING THE CAREER MINDSET

The Hill, though high, I covet to ascend, the difficulty will not me offend; for I perceive the way to life lies here: Come, pluck up, heart; let's neither faint nor fear; better, though difficult, the right way to go.

John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Part 1, Para. 211.

Chapter 4 presents the findings from Phase 1 of the study. The journey metaphor for framing the study emerged early in the research, and was adopted to present the unfolding experiences of the ECANs in the early stage of their employment. The metaphor emphasises that, like a journey, a career takes time, the direction is not always linear, and continual effort is needed to acquire the skills needed for progress, satisfaction and achievement.

The chapter begins with the aim of Phase 1 of the research, followed by the findings, their impact, and the next steps in the overall study. Then, the published article (cited below) is presented.

Refereed journal publication:

Wyllie, A., Levett-Jones, T., DiGiacomo, M. & Davidson., P. (2019). Exploring the experiences of early career academic nurses as they shape their career journey: A qualitative study. *Nurse Education Today*. 76, 68-72. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2019.01.021>

4.1 The aim of the article

As outlined in Chapter 1, ECANs in continuing employment are expected to be actively involved in their career development, a process that requires a mindset tuned to personal needs and plans. My aim in this article was to explore the participating ECANs' experiences of their career building and how they were meeting the challenges and developing the mindset required to navigate the twists and turns of their journey.

4.2 The impact of the article

At the time of thesis submission, this review has been cited seven times and it has gained attention on social media (Twitter and Mendeley). The Altmetric Attention Score for the review is 28, which is in the top 5% of all research outputs tracked by Altmetric. It has been

tweeted 46 times in four countries (Canada, United States, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. The majority arising from the United Kingdom), with an upper bound of 121,776 followers <https://www.altmetric.com/details/55017045>.

4.3 Key findings from the article

The findings from Phase 1 clarify that the ECANs expressed a willingness to work hard and a desire to fit in and work smart in order to be able to engage in research, meaningful work and opportunities to give back to the community. They were becoming more comfortable in finding a work–life balance, overcoming challenges, and in managing their academic careers in ways that produced possibilities for growth and success. The findings, however, also reveal that despite being a few years into becoming career academics and with momentum building, the ECANs were still experiencing frustration with their lack of enjoyment of the journey. In particular, they found it difficult to overcome feelings of isolation, increase their self-confidence and have certainty about the future. All ECANs realised that feedback and support were needed to strengthen their career mindset and add to their confidence and resilience.

4.4 Next steps

Following the systematic literature review, a prototype reflective supportive program was created for Phase 2. The findings from Phase 1 helped finalise the program’s design, putting more focus on what renowned psychologist Carol Dweck (2008) labelled a growth mindset. In her research, Dweck found that those who – like the ECANs – tend to view intelligence as malleable, and who *‘believe that their most basic qualities can be developed through their efforts and education’* Dweck (2008, p. 292) give evidence of a growth mindset, and when given support are more likely to be successful at what they do.

In the ever-changing environment of higher education, a growth mindset can be seen as a valuable asset for strengthening the talents and abilities required. However, more work is needed by the ECANs and their university departments to promote development of a growth mindset. Chapter 5 details the program written to support the ECANs and their career mindsets.

4.5 Exploring the experiences of early-career academic nurses as they shape their career journey: A qualitative study

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Exploring the experiences of early career academic nurses as they shape their career journey: A qualitative study



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Early career academic nurse
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ABSTRACT

Objective: This study aimed to explore the experiences of early career academic nurses as they shape their career path in one Australian university.

Background: The early years of academic career development can be challenging as individuals learn to adjust to the teaching, research and service mission of universities. Tertiary institutions have an obligation to provide future nursing leaders with relevant and timely support during the formative phase of career development, to be successful in a competitive global environment.

Design: A qualitative descriptive approach was used and data were analysed thematically using Braun and Clarke (2006) six phase process.

Methods: Eleven early career academic nurses who were interviewed, had completed, or were near completion of a doctorate and were within seven years of full-time academic employment.

Results: The four themes that emerged from the analysis were: embarking on the journey; the toil of the journey; fellow travellers on the journey, and strategies for a successful journey.

Conclusions: Findings from this study can be used to inform customised mentorship programs for nurse academics during their initial stage of career employment.

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CHAPTER 5: PHASE 2 – STRENGTHENING A CAREER MINDSET

*Art thou for something rare and profitable?
Then read my fancies; they will stick like burs,
And may be, to the helpless, comforters.*

John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Apology, Part 1, Lines 206, 210–211.

Phase 2 consisted of the planning, implementation and evaluation of PECAN. The chapter commences with a section on learning constructs and the adult learning principles that underpinned the program. It then provides an outline of the influences of appreciative inquiry on PECAN, followed by details of the program's design, implementation and evaluation. In the development of this educational initiative, particular attention was paid to the individual learning needs of participants that were identified during phase 1, notably those related to strengthening the ECANs' career mindsets. Findings from phase 1 were that individuals sought strategies to maximise career growth and development or enhancement of the qualities that would help them overcome the challenges of their journey. However, they also needed to strengthen qualities that could inculcate a positive outlook, a competitive edge, and boost their professional lives. The chapter concludes with the published evaluation of PECAN.

5.1 PECAN planning

The planning of PECAN involved an analysis of the educational constructs and approach required to enable the ECANs to effectively respond to the needs and goals of the program.

5.1.1 Learning constructs

Learning constructs are an important part of planning a program as they provide both the facilitator of the learning and the learner with a consistent language and opportunities for increased learner involvement (Ramsden, 2003). Educationalists also prefer learners to take a this deeper approach as it can impact on the outcomes. Ramsden (2003) a strong advocate for the individualistic learning calls it '*an achieving approach*'. According to (Biggs, 2012) an '*achieving approach*' is used when a deep approach to learning offers such personal advantages as: enhancing self-esteem and self-confidence. The learning constructs and learning principles used for PECAN are now explained.

Constructivist learning

Constructivist learning is not knowledge written or transplanted to a person's mind as if the mind was a blank slate waiting to be written on or an empty vessel waiting to be filled. Rather, advocates of the theory believe that learning is deepened by the individual – that the learner is the one to actively construct knowledge (Bruner, 2009; Dewey, 1997), either by integrating new concepts with prior knowledge or by recognising when a given new concept's revelations may make previously held prior knowledge obsolete. Basically, people use their previous knowledge as a foundation and build on it as they learn new things, and the consequent reality is determined by the individual's experiences (Knowles, 1970).

A constructivist view of learning is not new; it has its origins in the work of philosophers such as Plato, Spinoza, Kant and Nietzsche (Knowles, 1970). Contemporary work, however, is often based on the work of Lewin in the 1930s and 1940s and Piaget in the 1960s (Ültanir, 2012). In particular, Piaget's theories of developmental psychology inform us how mental processes work toward the construction of meaningful knowledge, forming knowledge from objects and experiences that we have critically considered and learnt from Di Vesta (1987). Contemporary psychologists take this point further, emphasising the need for constructive learning and adult education to be viewed through a socio-cultural lens. Vygotsky's general genetic law of cultural development has had major influence; he claims that learning always occurs in two planes – first on the social and later on the individual plane (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky's view acknowledges that experiences do not occur in a vacuum, rather it is the learner's responsibility to make sense of experience by interpretation and reinterpretation. I deemed this interpretation and reinterpretation central to making learning meaningful and constructive for the ECANs who took part in my study.

Adult learning principles

Knowles (1970), a leading educational theorist, listed six assumptions necessary to motivate and maximise adult learning. Adults learn best when they are able to:

- Apply what they are learning;
- Be self-directed;
- Share and build on experiences;

- See personal benefit;
- Receive feedback; and
- Use different approaches to learning.

Table 5.1 below outlines Knowle's six principles, which were taken into consideration when planning and implementing PECAN, in detail. I also make critical links to the adult principles underpinning PECAN in this chapter. The rest of Chapter 5 informs the reader about how both constructivist learning and adult learning principles were applied to PECAN.

Table 5.1. Key principles of adult Learning and implications for learning (Knowles, 1970)

Adult Principle	Implication for learning	Actions
Apply what they are learning	Adults learn best when they can relate new knowledge and information with previously learned knowledge, information and experiences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities to reflect upon and share their existing knowledge and experience • Create learning activities that involve the use of past experience or knowledge • Ask learners to reflect on prior experiences
Be self-directed	Adults tend to react well to autonomous learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design training around participants' needs and goals and allow adults to establish a specific learning objective or goal for themselves • Provide various activities to develop and focus their self-directed efforts and achieve learning • Provide opportunity-guided inquiry and self-facilitated small-group discussions
Share and build on experiences	Adults need their experiences, beliefs, knowledge and ideas viewed as important	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design training to minimise each learner's risk and embarrassment • Provide opportunities for learners to share ideas, questions, opinions and experiences • Create an environment that ensures everything that is contributed is appropriately shared • Make it safe for learners to express thought and confusion (develop house rules) • Provide opportunities for 'wins' to assist self-concept and satisfaction
Know why they are learning	Adults want practical, goal-oriented, and problem-centred learning that can immediately help them deal with life's challenges and personal aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask (as appropriate) learners to identify what they would like to learn about a topic • Establish clear learning objectives that make the connection with needs • Share examples and stories that relate to participants' current challenges • Engage learners in identifying the challenges they face • Follow theories with practical examples and applications to demonstrate their relevance
Receive feedback	Adults desire feedback on the progress they are making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide opportunities for learners to get immediate feedback • Encourage learners to self-evaluate • Encourage continued learning
Use different approaches to learning	Adults have preferences for the way in which they learn. They react well to collaboration and reciprocity – an environment where people learn with others while sharing what they already know	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a low-risk environment for learning • Use a wide variety of methods • Use all three learning modes (kinaesthetic, visual and auditory) • Free learners to learn in the style that best suits them by using small group work and individual activities • Set up opportunities and encourage networking

Appreciative inquiry influence

Appreciative inquiry as noted in section 3.3. underpins the planning, implementation and evaluation of the PECAN modules. The modules were written with the intent of assisting the ECANs to view the realities of their position, while aiming to capture their enthusiasm and motivation. It was anticipated that, when the ECANs in the study reflected upon and reviewed possibilities and achievements such as best practices and accomplishments, these positive phenomena would be assimilated into their *career mindsets*. Kessler (2013) takes this further and adds that given sufficient and effective support allows these 'captured of positive attitudes' (p. 3) to carry be carried through to the environment stimulating 'new ideas, stories and images that generate new possibilities for action' (p. 2).

5.2 PECAN implementation

The implementation of PECAN was carried out over several months. This section sets out the construction of the program and the steps and supports given to its implementation.

5.2.1 The program's construction

The program was written to offer the ECANs a set of practical activities for academic reflection and self-evaluation of their academic career portfolios. To achieve such a positive model of personal excellence requires:

- development of positive, healthy and effective mutual relations;
- engagement with others during achievement of good results;
- self-awareness, understanding and evaluation of self; and
- operationalised leadership skills.

PECAN consisted of three sections, but the major focus of the program was the collaboratory – a place where ECANs would meet to discuss and share ideas and opinions about their career development, and learn from guest speakers. Details of the other sections of the program can be found in Appendix 11.

Six collaboratories were held at monthly intervals. The objective of these sessions was to engender open discussion about vital information for activating personal careers, and during the process, to maximise peer support, which has been found to accelerate career learning (Mercieca & Kelly, 2018). I created, organised and observed the collaboratories, and took notes in my journal. Each session involved an experienced academic who led discussion on the theme designated for that collaboratory. Each collaboratory lasted two hours, with lunch provided beforehand so that the participants could network with each other and the guest speaker. The sessions were not filmed or recorded (other than in my notes).

5.2.2 The collaboratory approach

The term ‘collaboratory’ was used in phase 3 to describe an open space for creative processes and people to work together to generate solutions to complex problems. Each PECAN collaborative had a problem or hurdle for the early-career academics to discuss and find solutions. It was anticipated that in the exchange of ideas new strategies would emerge to meet or overcome the problem.

The collaborative implementation of PECAN originated from the belief that knowledge is an active process in which learners strive to discover principles, concepts and facts for themselves (Matsushita, Matsushita, & Hasebe, 2018) . This is in line with the theory that knowledge is constructed at first in a social context, internalised, and then shaped by the activities and perspectives of the group – a process called ‘*collaborative elaboration*’ by Van Meter and Stevens (2000). It follows that if knowledge can be obtained collaboratively, then learning can be constructed by communities of individuals and that the shaping and testing of ideas is a process in which all participate. This stresses the importance of inquiry-based learning – a process through which learners can experience knowledge as something that is created, rather than something that is only transmitted to the learner (Aditomo, Goodyear, Bliuc, & Ellis, 2013).

Collaborative learning originates in several movements and philosophies. It draws heavily from the schools of experiential learning based on the work of the philosopher Dewey

and the social psychologists Piaget and Vygotsky (Mayer, 2008). It also leans on the small group theory advanced by Kurt Lewin (Burns, 2014). Critical thinking and problem-centred learning have also made contributions (Hmelo-Silver, Chinn, O'Donnell, & Chan, 2013). Three areas are important in order foster collaborative learning: the environment, the role of the guest facilitator, and the role of the learner (Palincsar & Herrenkohl, 2002).

5.2.3 The collaboratory environment

According to Cox (2015), the constructive learning environment should both support and challenge the learner's thinking. While my study's intent was to give the learner ownership of the problem solution process, I did not believe that any one activity or solution was adequate. The primary goal was to help the ECANs to become effective in thinking about their careers and focus on a career mindset in a diverse and global environment. Therefore, I sought to construct an environment in which ideas and opinions could be shared and encouraged in a mutually respectful setting.

A safe, private, comfortable environment assists the learning process (Amirul et al., 2013). Hence, I created a space where the individual's prior experiences, learning styles and factors associated with meaningful learning could be tested, with the objective of helping the ECANs to understand their needs. The environment needed to be non-threatening and democratic to encourage the sharing of views. My notes and the interviews showed that the environment I created was a sound learning platform for the ECANs, and that the detailed preparation, prior to the sessions, gave momentum to the discussions.

5.2.4 Role of the collaboratory facilitator

A collaborative learning approach reframes the traditional role of the teacher as the authority and transmitter of knowledge. Labelling the guest speaker, a facilitator, rather than a teacher or speaker, supports the social constructivist view of a learning environment – a view that the person leading the session is not the only holder of knowledge. A facilitator helps the learner to realise individual possibilities and generate new ones. In this approach, the facilitator enters into a process of mutual inquiry with the

participants as knowledgeable co-learners. In this way, according to MacGregor (1990), authority, expertise, power and control are redefined. In a more recent focus on collaboratory facilitation, Muff (2017); discusses the challenges that are presented for the facilitator to cover the so-called content of the session and yet remain committed to the process. I briefed all the facilitators on the session through face-to-face meetings about the approach and also invited facilitators who could develop methods of sharing their expertise without usurping the learning process and also motivate the ECANs.

Being introduced as facilitators rather than teachers meant that each of the guest speakers needed to display appropriate skills (Knowles, 1975) and be ready to challenge the ECANs' outdated or 'negative' thoughts. Brookfield (1986) observed that one of the facilitator's most demanding tasks, but one that could make a significant difference to learning, was *'to assist in the development of a group culture in which adults can feel free to challenge one another and feel comfortable with being challenged'* (p. 14).

An important part of implementation is to evaluate outcomes, so that plans can be made to improve the program's content and educational impact. The published article describing the evaluation can be found at 5.5.

5.2.5 Role of the collaboratory learners

An effective learning program where collaborative learning is a focus allows participants to develop and build on prior knowledge and learning skills. It is a shared learning process where the learners engage in systematic and sustained self-educating activities in order to gain new skills, attitudes, knowledge or values. It is also built on the assumption that adults can and want to learn, that they are able and willing to take responsibility for that learning, and that the learning itself should respond to their individual needs. In this instance the ECANs were particular interested in sharing and learning about strategies for career building and this gave a shared focus for learning.

Constructivism has been linked to empowering the learner in decision-making and self-direction (Grier-Reed & Skaar, 2010). Knowles, Mezirow and Rogers are amongst the most

well-known educationalists favouring self-directed learning (Ramsden, 2003). These educationalists have written about the core elements of self-directed learning and constructivist learning; they argued that the two concepts interrelate and coexist, and are even symbiotic (Lin, 2003). Indeed, (Candy, 1989) stated that *'constructivism is particularly congruent with the notion of self-direction considering its emphasis on active enquiry, independence in the task and individuality in constructing meaning'* (p. 95). Although much early work in constructivist-based education research was conducted with children (Piaget, 1964), the implicit links between adult learning and constructivism indicate that constructivism has an important role in adult knowledge construction (Candy, 1989).

Adult learning is often based on personal judgements, confirmation of personal interpretations via evidence that supports them, and testing whether situational or surroundings account for perceptions and experiences (Candy, 1989). In other words, our personal constructs are moulded on experiences and reconstructed knowledge and hence do not necessarily mirror the way others perceive the real world. To a constructivist, therefore, knowledge does not necessarily reflect or map exactly external reality but consists of a set of workable hypotheses or templates constantly being put to the test through the person and the particular situation.

Constructivist epistemology challenges the traditional belief that the teacher is the holder of knowledge (Ramsden, 2003). It offers a framework that takes account of the individual's prior experiences, learning styles and factors associated with meaningful learning (i.e. learning that includes understanding).

The symbiotic relationship between constructivist epistemology and adult learning theory allows for the adult to be a self-directed learner and capable of demonstrating active learning processes, such as metacognition. These processes are not only closely aligned but important in any discussion of adult learning, because together they endorse and encourage active learning.

5.3 PECAN evaluation

PECAN was evaluated to measure the impact of the program as a means of support for the ECANs and to enable reflection and feedback on their journey. Details of the evaluation are set out in the following publication.

Refereed journal publication:

Wyllie, A., Levett-Jones, T., DiGiacomo, M. & Davidson., P. (2020). An evaluation of early career academic nurses' perceptions of a support program designed to build career-resilience. *Nurse Education in Practice*. 48, October 2020.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2020.102883>

5.3.1 The aim of the article

To trial and evaluate a customised reflective program designed to encourage ECANs to critically reflect on strategies designed to support and build their career journeys.

5.3.2 The impact of the article

At the time of thesis submission, this review had been cited once and gained attention on social media including Twitter, Mendeley and Facebook. The Altmetric Attention Score for the review is 19, which is in the top 25% of all research outputs tracked by Altmetric. It has been tweeted 41 times by 32 tweeters in five countries, with an upper bound of 66,411 followers: <https://www.altmetric.com/details/89850863>.

5.3.3 Key findings

Involvement with PECAN led to the ECANs fostering connections, strengthening expertise and clarifying directions. All three are effective mechanisms for supporting professional growth and an effective career mindset. ECANs with a career mindset are more likely to view change as an opportunity for career growth, even if it is stressful or challenging. The evaluation also offered evidence that collegial support is crucial for strengthening ECANs'

belief in themselves and their accomplishments, and bring resilience to their career journey.

5.4 Summary and next steps

From the discussion above, it follows that when designed in accordance with constructivist theory and adult learning principles, collaborative learning infrastructure has the potential to provide benefits for ECANs. Constructivism offers more control to make sense of personal career needs within academia, and not only acknowledges the uniqueness and complexity of learners, but encourages, utilises and rewards them as integral parts of the learning process.

If ECANs are to sustain career growth within an everchanging workplace, their career mindsets require flexible and productive intellectual behaviours. Actions required during the career journey can vary according to the goals set along the way. In this context, habits of mind can be a useful tool to assist ECANs to make choices about which pattern of learning best fits their situation. Knowledge about the habits of mind ECANs deploy over time can also assist educationalists and policymakers to understand how best to support their career requirements.

5.5 An evaluation of early career academic nurses' perceptions of a support program designed to build career resilience

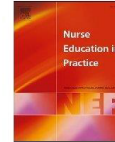
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Doctorate Studies

An evaluation of early career academic nurses' perceptions of a support program designed to build career-resilience

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ARTICLE INFO

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ABSTRACT

Early career academic nurses can struggle to meet the demands of career development due to feelings of being overwhelmed. Studies indicate that programs targeting these challenges are often sporadic and inconsistent, leading to dissatisfaction and missed opportunities. This paper reports on findings evaluating a program designed to build career-resilience in a group of early career academic nurses who, through the provision of a structured program of support, were enabled to succeed and thrive in the academy. This six session program was informed by Knowles' adult learning theory, Mezirow's transformational learning theory and Lord's reliance on critical transactions. This study was undertaken in a large metropolitan university in Sydney, Australia. Participants included nine early career academic nurses. All had been full-time academics from one to six years. A qualitative descriptive design was employed using Braun and Clarke's six stage process for data analyses. Three themes emerged: the program *fostered connections, strengthened expertise and clarified directions*. This analysis provided deep insights into the value of collegial relationships to galvanise career success. The program's strength was its ability to lessen participants' feelings of isolation and to develop behaviours that enhance career-resilience.

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CHAPTER 6: PHASE 3 – SUSTAINING A CAREER MINDSET

*Who would true valour see,
Let him come hither;
One here will constant be,
Come wind, come weather
There's no discouragement
Shall make him once relent
His first avowed intent
To be a pilgrim.*

John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*
(Mason, 1993, p. 619)

As discussed earlier, constructing a career takes time and thoughtful attention. This chapter describes the habits of mind of the ECANs as they negotiated the complex environment of academia, and identifies which habits of mind were useful for sustaining a career mindset. The chapter begins with the aim of the publication, before presenting the impact and key findings. The chapter concludes with a brief outline of the next steps, which are the subject of Chapter 7.

Refereed journal publication:

Wyllie, A., Levett-Jones, T., DiGiacomo., M. & Davidson., P. (2021). A qualitative study exploring 'habits of mind' of a group of early career academic nurses as they sharpen their career mindset to sustain their journey. *Nurse Education in Practice*.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2021.103149>

6.1 The aim of the article

The aim of the research reported in the article cited above was to explore the qualities that sustained a career mindset in a group of Australian ECANs. As outlined in previous chapters, the development of an academic career involves constant challenges. Self-regulatory skills and intelligent behaviours are important means of overcoming those challenges in order to sustain a career mindset. Not every challenge will be a new one, so adoption of habits of mind can be viewed as a useful addition to the career mindset.

An interest in human 'habits' in connection with intelligent behaviours can be traced back Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas (Bell et al., 2013). In more modern times the work of William James in the early 1900's brought habits to the centrality of intelligent behaviours and our ways of interpreting and dealing with the world. James was concerned with the physiological basis of habits and he believed that they *'had the means to stabilise ... and sort our behaviour ... and assist us in our attempts to face the future'* (James Campbell, 2019, p. 237). Later John Dewey, a pioneer in functional psychology, believed that the importance of 'habits' lay in their individuality and positive impact on our learning. Positivity and the role of 'mindset' in fostering success became a widely popular topic of the mid-2000's due to the work of renowned researcher on motivation and achievement, Carol Dweck and this has been a sound platform for further research by educational scholars Costa and Kallick.

Costa and Kallick (2013) regarded habits of mind as dispositions to perform intelligent behaviours when a problem requires solving and the answer is not immediately known. Deploying habits of mind requires a combination of skills, attitudes, past experiences and proclivities. It means that we value one pattern of thinking over another, and therefore it implies choice about which habit should be employed at which time in order to produce the most effective growth outcome. In a competitive environment where self-managed careers are encouraged of early adoption of the 'Habits of Mind' that engenders career progress would be extremely useful for the busy ECAN. Phase 3 focuses on the Habits of mind that offer ECAN progress.

6.2 The impact of the article

At the time of thesis submission, this review had been cited four times and received of attention on social media including Twitter, Mendeley and Facebook. The Altmetric Attention Score for the review is 6, which is in the top 25% of all research outputs tracked by Altmetric. It has been tweeted 11 times from 11 tweeters in three countries, with an upper bound of 18,092 followers: <https://www.altmetric.com/details/109619021>.

6.3 Key findings

The academic career journey is complex. It is best driven by the individual, but faculties and departments should also support an effective career mindset. The evidence from Chapter 6 shows that the talents found in a growth mindset alone are not the solution to a career mindset, which requires ECANs to develop a set of intelligent behaviours or habits of mind to surmount whatever challenge is thrown at them. A cluster of five habits of mind were effective in meeting these challenges: taking charge of self; taking responsible risks; working competently with colleagues; and keeping an open mind and remaining curious. These habits provide a focus for their efforts and offer a pathway for future learning and for the ECANs to sustain their career growth mindsets.

6.4 Next steps

The research presented thus far explored the importance of both a growth mindset and habits of mind to shape, support and sustain a career journey. The final phase, detailed in Chapter 7, consisted of an evaluation of the ECANs achievements and the qualities that sustain their journey.

6.5 A qualitative study exploring 'habits of mind' of a group of early-career academic nurses as they sharpen their career mindset to sustain their journey

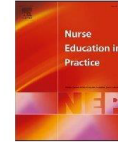
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A qualitative study exploring the career mindset of a group of early career academic nurses as they deployed 'Habits of Mind' to sustain their career journey

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ABSTRACT

Aim: This study aimed to explore the qualities that sustain a career mindset in a group of early career academics in one Australian university.

Background: Building an academic career is a lengthy, convoluted and complex journey requiring a mindset prepared to make informed and timely decisions. Success is predicated to a large extent on the ability of persons to process information effectively before actions are taken. Employing 'Habits of Mind' supports growth in intelligent behaviours through acquiring a composite of skills, attitudes, cues and past experiences that maximises appropriate choice of one pattern of thinking over another. A level of skill is required to employ 'Habits of Mind', suggesting that reflection and evaluation of experiences are critical to the process.

In this, the third phase of a four-phase sequential study, the career mindset of a group of early career academic nurses were studied during 2019. A cluster of 'Habits of Mind' emerged as having value for an academic career mindset, allowing the individuals to meet challenges of negotiating a career terrain and deepening their learning about those situations. Time and energy could therefore be appropriated to engage with the academic global community in new and career challenging health related research.

Design: A qualitative descriptive approach.

Methods: The study applied the epistemology and constructivist thinking of John Dewey and the self-directed learning theories of Mezirow and Knowles. Set in a large metropolitan university in Sydney, Australia. A purposive sample of nine early career academic nurses were interviewed using semi-structured, one-to-one audio-taped interviews. Data were analysed thematically using Braun and Clarke (2006) six phase process.

Results: Findings revealed that deployment of the cluster of the five distinctive themes or 'Habits of Mind': *Rely on self; take responsible risks; think with colleagues; keep an open mind and possess curiosity* into the novice nurses' mindset, expedited self-directed learning processes, resulting in sharpening of their learning power to enable a more productive career journey.

Conclusions: It is argued that 'Habits of Minds' can provide a valuable learning framework when directing a career mindset and, that inclusion by providers of leadership, career or mentorship programs can sustain an academic environment where a culture of learning can flourish and where ECANs are equipped with attributes and behaviours necessary to address global demands.

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CHAPTER 7: PHASE 4 – STORIES OF CAREER PROGRESS

*Come, tell me now further neighbour, what the things are you seek,
and how to be enjoyed, wither we are going.*

John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, p. 8

This chapter presents the final phase of my study of the mindsets of a cohort of ECANs. In Chapter 4 I described the experiences that shaped the ECANs' career mindsets, Chapter 5 focuses on the strengthening of their career mindsets, and Chapter 6 describes the impact of intellectual habits on their ongoing career mindsets. In this chapter, I use snapshots of the ECANs' stories to illustrate participants' individual journeys and how their stories convey the impact of a growth mindset on career progress, and distil their advice for future ECANs.

7.1 Participant stories

According to Butina (2015) using stories in evaluation is common in the arts, humanities and social sciences and is gaining momentum in nursing research (Green, 2013). A story is an account of events over time, and is built up from different elements to convey certain meanings from the standpoint of the narrator. It provides a context for thoughtful contemplation, and, as Sarbin (1986) described, stories provide, '*a structure used by an individual for the communication of an experience and as a representation of action*' (p. 15). Stories, according to (Nerstrom, 2017), can also have a transformative effect on the storyteller. Clandinin and Connelly (2004) stated that telling a story '*gives shape to [the storyteller's] own unique identity*' (p. 25) and '*plausible links between elements under study ... changes that have occurred and map a way forward*'.

The ECANs' stories are presented to depict their views of personal growth and career progress. When data collection for phase 3 of the study concluded, all nine ECANs remained in academia: two had been promoted from lecturer to senior lecturer, and two had accepted academic positions at other institutions to pursue new career trajectories.

Shortly, after completion of the study, one ECAN completed a doctorate, two enrolled in a doctorate, and another took leave to work on a doctorate. For the remaining ECAN a major collaborative grant had been awarded with local and/or international research teams.

In sharing their stories with me, the ECANs illuminated the interplay between commitment and dedication to their journeys which may otherwise have remained hidden. ECANs' stories reveal events and experiences that mattered to them personally and key points that influenced their growth and made their journeys more enjoyable.

7.2 A growth mindset

Carol Dweck coined the term 'growth mindset' to refer to the notion that intelligence and talents are not set in stone and could, with persistent effort, be developed over time with appropriate praise and rewards Dweck (2008). According to Dweck (2008), a person with this approach is more successful in finding ways to overcome challenges than a person with a fixed mindset. She argued that fostering a growth mindset allowed people to value what they were doing, regardless of the outcome, because they tended to embrace new ideas, had more energy, and could commit enthusiastically to new tasks. A growth mindset also accommodates an emphasis on learning and evaluating progress over time. On the other hand, a person with a fixed mindset tends to believe that their basic qualities, like their intelligence or talent, are fixed traits that must be accepted.

7.3 A tale of two journeys

To represent the above concepts of a fixed and growth mindset within the context of a journey, two examples are given. The first describes a journey in which a fixed mindset was dominant, and the second one in which a growth mindset dominates. The journeys are viewed through the scholarly work of Dweck (Dweck & Yeager, 2019) and, due to a similarity in the experiences that drove the ECANs' career progress, a collective narrative is used to outline the overall growth mindset journey.

7.3.1 A fixed mindset journey

This section returns to the story of Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress* (as told in the prologue) as an example of a journey involving persistence, commitment and achievement. Many scholars have studied Christian's single-minded journey to see what can be learnt about him and his dogged approach to achieving his goal. Christian is not represented as a particularly complex or conflicting person. His attitude to his journey and his tasks chime with Dweck's description of a person who favours a fixed mindset.

The Pilgrim's Progress begins with Christian embarking on a difficult journey. In his haste to achieve this goal, he falls into the Slough of Despond and almost drowns. Christian is assisted by Help and recommences on the path, but with new doubt about his ability to undertake the journey. From this time on, although Christian's destination remains clear, but he is unsure of what he needs to succeed. Because of this he is easily distracted from his path by the many individuals, some who are nefarious. Along the way, Christian meets and is given sound advice by the Evangelist and others who reassure him and encourage him onto the right path. Christian begins to view obstacles and challenges as opportunities, and he discovers that his fellow travellers can be supportive; however, he does not capitalise on his experiences or seek to assist other troubled travellers. Christian eventually arrives at his destination. Despite the hardships, he remained true to his goal; however, at the conclusion of his journey he has few insights into the personal talents that led to his success, and in this and his unwillingness to question his path, he displays a fixed mindset.

7.3.2 A growth mindset journey

A growth mindset, unlike a fixed mindset, flourishes by embracing change and a belief that you have the talents to change (Dweck & Yeager, 2019). As they embarked on their journeys, the ECANs, like Christian in *The Pilgrim's Progress*, were keen, eager and committed, and this gave them hope and optimism. However, in many cases their enthusiasm waned as the complexity of academia and the realities of the multiple challenges before them became apparent. Like Christian, they found themselves

distracted by the toil of the journey and the slough of high workloads and administrative tasks. They too may have floundered and sunk into the mire, had they not been vigilant and hardworking. The ECANs rose to meet the challenges with effort and persistence, taking comfort from small wins, chipping away at the hurdles over time by upskilling themselves and becoming involved in faculty business.

Over time, the ECANs became more adaptable, took responsible risks and sought opportunities to consolidate their abilities. Several applied for new roles and responsibilities because they realised these positions would lead to future benefits and outcomes. They accepted that success in academia required hard work. They learnt that the things that mattered to their progress required continued practice and they had to combat frustration and find time and energy for research.

Unlike Christian, the ECANs sought support from people who could assist and advise them. At intervals during their journeys, they accepted *'a helping hand'* from colleagues as they tried to find their feet, and they became successful in networking and forging relationships with colleagues. They invested time and effort in *'seek[ing] out the people that you need to talk to'*. Some ECANs developed mentee–mentor relationships; others *'just got on with it'*. The facilitative support program (PECAN) helped the ECANs to appreciate the value of collegiality and camaraderie and to take pride in their achievements.

The benefits of acquiring a growth mindset were evident as the ECANs' journeys progressed. They became persistent and welcomed collegial support, while recognising that they needed to take charge of their individual journeys – becoming proactive and developing and sustaining attitudes and habits that met their long-term needs for career growth. Their belief in themselves as effective problem solvers had increased and this adherence to a growth mindset led to personal progress and career growth.

7.4 Snapshots of individual ECANs' journeys

This section presents snapshots of participant stories demonstrating key elements of the ECANs' growth mindset over time, and the advice the participants offered to future ECANs during their third interviews.

7.4.1 Alex's journey

Alex had been a registered nurse for many years and had practised in a range of clinical positions involving high levels of responsibility and experienced the running of a successful business. There had been casual academic work before being offered a continuing position. At the beginning of the journey, Alex displayed belief in personal abilities and how they would lead to success.

I believe that I have the skills to make a difference to other nurses seeking a change ... I am so pleased that I'm here at the age that I am with life experience and experience running a successful business. There's a lot of traits that I have required such as working independently and persistence to achieve outcomes. Coming from other jobs are a good training ground and it has made my progress thus far.
[Interview 1, February 2017]

However, Alex soon realised that support and assistance was required in order to achieve academic career growth. At the second interview stated:

I now believe my colleagues left me alone because they thought I was capable and OK ... after attending the support program [PECAN] I realised I needed a mentor, someone who can be realistic about what's next for me. You've got to have feedback. You can't be a sole researcher. And I guess that sort of translates to the way research is conducted today in teams. [Interview 2, March 2018]

At the completion of the study, Alex was still employed in academia and had a growing profile in the faculty. Alex appeared to be content with an academic career, and although

there had been occasional thoughts of resigning, new commitments had ignited further interest in academia:

I went for promotion. I was successful. I am able to work in the area of research that I am passionate about and express myself in circles where changes can be made. I will continue to work hard. Appreciation from my colleagues and the rewards from teaching have kept me going. [Interview 3, February 2019]

Alex's strategy of finding support proved to be a successful career strategy:

I have now found my feet with a team and am able to practise the research that I feel [is] making a difference to the community. It was the feedback; and as I recall, even now the feeling of collegiality [in PECAN] which sent me to secure a mentor who opened my eyes to opportunities. [Interview 3, February 2019]

For Alex, ongoing opportunities for professional growth meant that work was becoming increasingly enjoyable and rewarding.

I just want to do some good work. That's all ... I have had a really successful career as a clinician and I wanted to follow on from and answer a question from my PhD research. So somehow, I ended up here and I like it. That's the thing. I really do like working here and feel committed to my role and research projects. [Interview 3, February 2019]

Advice for future ECANs

When Alex was asked what advice could be given to future ECANs the following key points were mentioned:

You need to be realistic about what is possible but at the same time value your own particular talents as they will give you satisfaction.

[ECANs] are looking for impact, they are looking for engagement with industry, they are looking for translation into practice. So, you can't do that on your own.

So, a network is really important as it shares information and gives a new perspective on your views. [Interview 3, February 2019]

7.4.2 Andy's journey

After completing a PhD Andy became a full-time researcher, before securing an academic position. When asked about reasons for making an application to the faculty and the enthusiasm they had for an academic career, Andy said.

It was just [the] right moment, right time – the reason I did it was I wanted to do research ... research is so important, teaching is fine, that's what you're meant to do, but the importance of research [and] doing research is deeply ingrained because of my experience as a researcher. [Interview 1, March 2017]

Another important part of Andy's journey was a safe working environment.

'Safe' meant to have a go, safe to ask questions, safe to have discussions, safe to receive feedback that may not always be positive and know that tomorrow you're going to come back and that's okay and we're still all right even though you've given me that feedback. I am so blessed because I feel safe. [Interview 2, April 2018]

Feeling safe gave Andy confidence, and this in turn assisted with growth and progress:

It's important to get recognition. People think I am outgoing but I am really quite shy, but I got some tips at the PECAN and from colleagues about tweeting and approaching experts with more confidence. [Interview 3, February 2019]

Andy was promoted to senior lecturer during the study, and the new position was attributed to persistence, hard work and a willingness to be a team member.

Advice for future ECANs

You have to collaborate and be able to be a team player. You need to be able to work independently and have attention to detail. When you get a knockback from

[a journal about] a paper ... there'd be the initial gut wrench of, oh, but then you need to go ... "right, so we're just going to turn this, tweak it, look at it from a different angle ... so let's look at how we can change it." I think that helps you move on – negative thoughts are [un]helpful and destructive. [Interview 3, February 2019]

7.4.3 Adrian's journey

At the start of the study, Adrian had been employed as a continuing academic staff member for several years. Adrian spoke of being mature-aged and reported taking a large pay cut to pursue an academic career. Prior experiences and personal attributes were particularly viewed by Adrian as important for achieving their success in academia.

I had already obtained a doctorate in nursing prior to employment at the university. I regard myself as an experienced professional nurse who has worked in industry in highly responsible positions where you rely on your own judgment. I came into academia with a view of giving something back to nursing and society through my research and teaching. I recognised early that this would be a different journey but I was used to self-reliance and making decisions. [Interview 1, February 2017]

Adrian was awarded a senior lecturer's position just after participating in the study's second interview, and attributed success to *'win[ning] grants that are big enough to make a difference and to get messages out there and to advocate for vulnerable groups'*.

Adrian noted the importance of helping early-career academics who were struggling, saying that *'we don't value the juniors enough ... there is no message of valuing staff ... we don't have the people that can maintain spirit; we don't have the coach'*. [Interview 2, March 2018]

Following the final interview, Adrian remained in contact with some previous colleagues in the health community, and was enjoying the academic journey and being in charge of their career development.

As an academic I sit on some health committees ... they identify an issue, and I look at it. So, at the moment my research is a bit patchy but it's around public health policy where I can make a difference and I enjoy [doing that]. [Interview 3, February 2019]

Advice for future ECANs

When I asked what advice, could be given future ECANs, Adrian stated:

This may seem odd but I think honesty. Honesty to say to yourself in that this is how it is ... you will waste time and a lot of energy in many things. It will happen. You know ... honesty to say that you will get frustrated. You will be miserable at times. You will go through many different feelings around I am not making it. I can't do it ... you need an honesty check about feeling good when you do well ... you need to give yourself a boost but you also need get the boost from a mentor or someone you respect. Feedback like this is important. You just need to have it. [Interview 3, February 2019]

7.4.4 Chris's journey

Chris was a committed clinician and academic who had completed a doctorate prior to participating in the study. *'I worked casually at another university before taking up this position. I completed my doctorate in nursing since becoming an academic. My pathway previous to that was in a clinical education environment'. [Interview 1, March 2017]*

Chris believed that the factors that had made the biggest impact on their progress were academic skills, determination, resilience and support:

'Understanding what is needed for academic freedom ... what it is about and what skills and talents do I have ... it's like nobody is going to tell you about what you can and can't write to a point really, or what you want to go and study ... you need determination in improving your skills in writing. You have actually got to be good at this because that is your job. I think it is also about learning not to waste

anything. Putting the rejected paper in the drawer and coming back and saying, no, I will put this back in because I want to see it published, the same with the grants as well, it's like no, I'll give this a shot and I will keep doing it and keep doing it. [Interview 1, March 2017]

Chris added, *'The best thing for me and my progress was having team supervision and for my supervisors to have faith in me and say "go for that grant" once I had completed my doctorate'.* [Interview 2, April 2018]

At the third interview, Chris offered the following evidence of making major career decisions:

I have taken a different path and left to continue work in industry in a clinical research centre. My research and contacts are growing internationally with the assistance of social media. I am still young and passionate about the people I work with and, for now I'm happy to continue my research in a centre – although I still keep in touch as you never quite leave [academia]. I have learnt that the university community has no walls as it is about the people and my contacts offered me the chances to progress. [interview 3, March 2019]

Advice for future ECANs

Enjoy and be interested in what you're researching or teaching because that energises you ... Learn to find or better still build your own team – a team can be supportive when you get those rejections re your publications.

Keep up-to-date documents – Your CV should include all grants applied for even if unsuccessful – this shows your skills even if you didn't get funding. Someone said to me 'Your CV is your passport.' Also, one thing I started during my PhD was Journalling ... on social media it's archived, so I just go back to my Twitter and search for something I tweeted about – paper or something, it is documented. It's quite public and exposed but it is another way of maybe Journalling stuff, and if I am somewhere like at a

conference, I will tweet at a conference all the time and get known. [Interview 3, March 2019]

7.4.5 Drew's journey

At the time of the first interview, Drew had completed their doctorate and had been an academic for several years. Drew had completed 'odd jobs' for academics while studying for a PhD and felt that this opportunity had helped develop confidence. Career success thus far however, had been due to being effectively mentored and having a personal thirst for learning.

Drew described them self as 'a bit of a workaholic', and when asked about a future career path said it was not planned but serendipitous. However, during several interviews there were many examples of their commitment and planning.

My entire life's been serendipity but I do a lot of planning but – the plan take twists and turns. I didn't have any burning desire to be an academic and I didn't think too much about the end goal. I was basically thinking research but, this position came along and was an opportunity to work full-time and to consolidate my PhD work. [Interview 1, February 2017]

I think, well, you know to be resilient you've got to face adversity, it's a prerequisite, you don't know if you're resilient until you face adversity. I have done so with my workload. My publishing is increasing and I find myself in a solid writing group. [Interview 2, April 2018]

By the third interview Drew had been promoted to senior lecturer and was pleased with the way 'my career had progressed'. Drew was also enjoying mentoring students, and was pursuing a full-time research position.

I am unsure as I have seen that the pure research lifestyle is very precarious and it's often contract driven, I need a little bit more surety but, I keep going because I love research. But I haven't got that track record bringing in the money that's what

professors are about. I got to this place by hard work and a mentor who believed in me.

I'm ... really enjoying life at the moment. I am doing meaningful work. I am on track to apply for another promotion soon – I don't think I'm that far off probably qualifying. It will mean leaving but, I'm comfortable here at the moment.
[Interview 3, February 2019]

Advice to future ECANs

Drew focussed on responsibility and being proactive:

Decide what you want to do but don't limit yourself. There is no easy or simple way of having an academic career. It takes time and effort ... Ultimately it comes down to how much you want to progress. Remember you are responsible for your career and it will take time to get a top position. The onus for your career is on you.

Future ECANs were advised to, *'Pick up and run with opportunities ... they can be scary but you learn so much about your capabilities and then have no regrets'*, and went on to say *'Observe, if you can and when you can, how experienced academics negotiate about getting support or resources, because – that's difficult – especially if you're new. I have found that successful people are approachable and helpful even though they are busy'*.
[Interview 3, February 2019]

7.4.6 Jamie's journey

At the first interview, Jamie had been a full-time academic for several years and described eloquently their optimistic approach to the beginning stages of their academic career:

I wasn't particularly driven to be an academic but find that I fit in. I enjoy what I do and feel that I make a difference to the lives of the students I teach. I am still finding my way but I remain optimistic about my progress, the challenges that it presents and my future as an academic. My belief in myself has got me this far; I

don't have a mentor but I have contacts through my doctoral work. [Interview 1 March 2017]

You make your own opportunities. For example, you can do research in your education, whatever it is that you have that passion. So that's something else I realised as well, is I have got to work with what is in my hands. So, if this is what I have got at the moment, let's get some research with what I have got right now ... This attitude has served me well thus far. [Interview 2, February 2018]

Jamie advised future ECANs that:

Research is really important and yes, we need to get publications and we need to finish our theses and whatever ... but more importantly, make the time to talk to people in the faculty – don't underestimate how much you can learn from them.

I think time management's a big one. So, you need to get really skilful with that but it takes time to become good at it ... I'm still learning. Sometimes what I notice [is that] people hang out in their little groups and you need to break into [them] ... it's not easy but the reward is a good little support team. [Interview 3, March 2019]

7.4.7 Dale's journey

At first interview, Dale had been working in the faculty for a few years and had previously worked at another university. A PhD had been completed 4 years ago. When describing the factors that had helped career progression, Dale said:

How much you put in corresponds with what you get out of it... that's how I look at it. I took on this position as my mentors said 'take on another challenge' ... so I did. I took it by the horns – maybe it works, maybe it doesn't work, but most people have reported being successful in that approach'. [Interview March 1, 2017]

Dale emphasised the importance of mentorship, saying *'it comes back to mentorship ... mentors are busy people especially if they're active researchers but they can*

accommodate some time to advice about progress' [interview 1, February 2017]. At the second interview, Dale again focused on the value of mentorship to her career journey:

Mentors are important at a beginning of a career ... find a leader in your field, someone that you aspire to be. I've got two and I just approached them saying, 'This is who I am, this is what I do; would you be interested in being my mentor?' I was fortunate enough to have one who was outside my discipline, so it helped give perspective. [Interview 2, April 2018]

Dale had commenced a new position by the last interview, and described the importance of reflection for success: *'I tend to be reflective and think how I have done, what have I learnt, what should I do better next time; it's all a learning [experience] ... yeah, reflection is important'*. They then returned to the importance of mentoring:

Early on I wish I had [a mentor] who understood what happens in my discipline, but I think looking back, it was actually a good thing to have someone who was outside my discipline – it made me consider interdisciplinary needs as well as nursing. [Interview 3, February 2019]

And discussed the value of failure:

I have learnt a lot more from failure than I have from success. It's okay to fail, it's okay to fail and to pick up the pieces and continue. Academics tend not to talk about their failures – if we can talk about more human experiences I think it would be far much better as people learn from these experiences. [interview 3, February 2019]

Advice to future ECANs

Find your feet first and [start] networking, because it takes a lot of time to establish those relationships.

You need to be patient and realistic. And wait three or four years at least before you even start to think about moving to a new university.

I've got a CV I look at almost every week. It's part of my training. [Interview 3, February 2019]

7.4.8 Terry's journey

At the time of the first interview, Terry had been employed as a full-time academic for about a year. They had been employed at another university previously, and attributed career success to having '*a strong mentor who [was] trusted*'. Terry had a five-year plan and was focused on being strategic.

There's a lot of factors that have to line up for you to progress. In a strong organisation and a supportive environment, where the aim is to produce leaders, then you need to plan. But without the right mentor, you're not going to know what opportunities are going, because if you've never done it before you're not going to know if that's going and if they will benefit your career pathway. [Interview 1, February 2017]

Terry added, '*one day I'd like to be viewed as a leader as I love my work. There are parts that I don't want to do but that's with any career*'. [Interview 2, April 2018]

Just after completion of the study, Terry decided to pursue a PhD while continuing with a part-time academic role. In the final interview, they stated that '*The research should be taking up more of my time. Having a reputation [as a researcher] is a measure of success – research is important to the faculty as well as to my career*'. [Interview 3, February 2019]

Advice to future ECANs

You have to enjoy what you do and be constantly looking for ways to improve. Asking for feedback is really important because that will make you a better academic. Find key people who will help you achieve your outcomes.

A mentor is really important. [Interview 3, February 2019]

7.4.9 Darcy's journey

Darcy commenced as a lecturer in nursing after casual teaching and research assistant work and self-described as a nurse researcher and clinician. At the time of the first interview, Darcy had just received a scholarship to undertake a doctorate.

I don't know yet if academia is really for me. But I got the scholarship and it was a great opportunity. I'm really interested in the topic, I enjoy research, so it made perfect sense for me to do it and I'm enjoying it. I realised that it is worthwhile to do my PhD, not only from a career perspective but also to have the respect ... you know, everybody here has their PhD don't they, or they're about to start – it's the expectation here. But as far as advancing my career to professional level, I'm not doing it for that. [Interview 1, March 2017]

Advice to future ECANs

You need to be very motivated with a lot of self-drive and initiative. And, find a team ... jump[ing] on the research bandwagon early would be beneficial. Look around the faculty to see who works in the area that you're interested in ... like someone senior ... one of the professors. Look at what research they are doing and make a meeting with them and see if they will guide you. Get involved, not too bogged down, in the teaching side of things ... the faculty values the research outputs just as much if not more than teaching. And research outputs are certainly on the agenda in terms of promotion. [Interview 3, March date 2019]

7.5 Discussion

The participants' stories demonstrate that they, like Christian, actively navigated their journeys and overcame obstacles to progress. However, unlike Christian, who demonstrated a fixed mindset in pursuing his journey, the ECANs explored new ideas, sought new skills and learned from feedback. These facts are evidence of a mindset that equips individuals to meet challenges, learn rapidly and develop a 'wider comfort zone' (Dweck, 2008) that allows a person to operate with ease and familiarity, even when they

are engaging with difficult challenges (Heslin et al., 2019). In other words, a growth mindset means people value their intelligence and talents, can use them in appropriate contexts, and believe that they can be developed over time. Individuals with a growth mindset also, according to Dweck (2008), are not concerned about defining themselves, but focus on the challenge at hand or the skill to be learned.

A key lesson from *The Pilgrim's Progress* is that Christian does not enjoy his journey, and this blunts his judgement. Although he does finally appear to experience some enjoyment when he receives his parchment for entry to the Celestial City, and knows his destination is near, most of his journey is spent anxiously trying to stay on the path. In contrast, satisfaction was important for the ECANs' success; this included the satisfaction gained from enhancing their professional reputation and status, described as '*subjective success*' (Sutherland, 2017, p. 745). It became apparent in this study that, despite the ECANs valuing success, there are few clear indicators of subjective success in academia. On the other hand, the notion of *objective success* is well established in the literature (Sutherland, 2017), although it was also ill-defined in the minds of the ECANs I studied. Consequently, both subjective and objective career success in academia need more research attention and more consideration in promotion, tenure and workload deliberations. The ECANs in this study realised that, although the academic workplace emphasises objective measures such as qualifications, research outputs, and teaching scores as key metrics of career success, they need to be tempered or balanced by satisfaction and enjoyment of what they do. For example, Drew noted that:

In the end you have to enjoy what you do, and be interested in what it is that you're researching or teaching in order to develop an increasing depth and value to the organisation and offer sophistication in one's.

In *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Christian's journey is portrayed as a rather solitary and lonely endeavour. Conversely, the ECANs in this study valued community and belonging, support and mentorship, and studies have demonstrated that loneliness reduces the ability to

meet workplace goals (Firoz, Chaudhary, & Khan, 2020). For the ECANs, personal career success was commensurate with the success of helping others:

If I were to look back in twenty-five years from now, and those students I've taught can say ... working with [person X] ... has enabled me to make a better contribution; it's enabled me to get a better sense of my own priorities and my own goals in life and how those goals are going to contribute to the common good and my own wellbeing, that would be a good sign of success. [Chris]

Another significant difference between the ECANs' journey and that of Christian's was that his destination was an absolute and predetermined priority, even though the nature of the journey to reach it was unclear. Success in reaching the Celestial City was everything to Christian, despite the cost of doing so to his family and his own state of mind. In contrast, the ECANs' career destinations and their individual trajectories were evolving. Indeed, many ECANs described the academic journey as vague and without clear signposts, unlike the structured journey undertaken by many successful clinical nurses. Despite these challenges, the ECANs in this study pursued their career goals doggedly through a strong sense of personal responsibility and appreciating that support was vital to sustain their journeys.

7.6 Concluding remarks

The participants' views in this chapter provide an evocative narrative illustrating the dynamic and evolving nature of ECANs' career journeys. The journey metaphor illustrates three key facets of career growth: direction, time and attitudes and time.

Although the ECANs described clear directions for academic success, they were aware of an apparent disconnect between their own career goals and their institutional goals. All of the ECANs had commenced their academic journeys with an understanding that work, experience and learning were vital. For some ECANs, becoming a scholar was a goal; the desire to conduct research drove others; others still wanted to perform meaningful work or give back to the community. Due to their differing goals, their timing for reaching them

varied, and few had firm plans; those who had been longest in academia had the clearest career plans. Despite differing destinations, the attitudes they adopted towards their journeys were similar; this finding may be useful when designing future orientation/support programs for ECANs.

7.7 Final steps

Chapter 8 concludes and the study comes-to-a-close. The key findings are reiterated and compared with those of previous literature on the topic of early-career academic transitions, and I propose recommendations for education, policy and research in relation to cultivating a career mindset in ECANs.

PART FOUR: THE PILGRIM'S PROGRESS

CHAPTER 8: DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

*And now before I do put up my pen,
I'll shew the profit of my book, and then
Commit both thee and it unto that Hand
That ... makes weak ones stand.*

[John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Part 1, Apology 3, Lines 7–10]

This chapter revisits the overall aim and research questions that framed this study, and presents a final discussion of the key findings. I then discuss the significance and implications of the work, and outline the study's limitations. The chapter concludes with recommendations and suggestions for future research related to the support, facilitation and education of ECANs who aspire to an academic career.

As previous chapters note, the development and retention of ECANs is vital to the sustainability of the nursing academic discipline (Halcomb et al., 2014). Nurses had a late entry during the early 2000s and in Australia this transition was swift and a particularly difficult experience for many nurses (Peters, 2014). My systematic literature review (Chapter 2) shows that the ECANs' adjustment to academia has been hampered by '*uncertainty*', '*role strain*' and '*role confusion*' (Wyllie et al., 2016) which have barriers for the ECANs' successful engagement with their careers. The review further identified that learning to cope with the challenges of academia took time and effort as the ECANs strove to build a career.

The key findings from the systematic review revealed that support for the ECANs has been sketchy during transition and there has been a failure by educational providers to tap into the factors that offer the ECANs a mindset ready to support, strengthen and sustain a career mindset in a complex and competitive career environment.

8.1 Revisiting the aim and research questions

The overall aim of the study was to critically examine the career mindsets of a cohort of ECANs as they progress through their careers. In doing so, I sought to discover the experiences that shaped their career mindsets, the factors that strengthened them, the personal qualities that sustained them, and the impact of a growth mindset on career progress. Making the transition from a clinical role to a nurse academic requires learning another set of professional norms and expectations. The study sought to tap into the everyday experiences of the ECANs in an attempt to bring understanding and clarity to the ECAN career building mindset. To explore the nuances of change over time, a longitudinal qualitative approach was chosen to address the overarching research question: What are the experiences that have shaped and strengthened Australian ECANs career mindsets and the personal qualities that sustained them?

8.2 Discussion of the key findings from the study

The key findings from the four phases are discussed below in separate sub-sections.

8.2.1 Phase 1: Shaping a career mindset

The aim of Phase 1 of this study was to explore the participating ECANs' experiences of their career building and how they were engaging with the challenges of building a mindset equipped to navigate the twists and turns of their journey as outlined in the literature review. The findings of Phase 1 (Chapter 4) showed that the ECANs became more attuned to the academic part of their role but nevertheless missed the certainty associated with the clinical part of their nursing identity. Career anxieties and uncertainty lingered, but were eventually overridden by a mindset that demonstrated positivity via a willingness to work hard and a desire to fit in and work smart in order to be able to engage in research, meaningful work and to give back to the community (Wyllie, Levett-Jones, DiGiacomo, & Davidson, 2019). The ECANs recognised that they had to take a hold of their career, however the findings revealed that some of the ECANs perceived that the faculty

(or university) was doing little to capitalise on their positive attitudes and help support a career mindset.

The findings showed that the role ambiguity and conflict that had previously been documented (Whitehead, 2015) did not present as much difficulty for the ECANs as the feelings of isolation, lack of self-confidence and feelings about the future. There were similarities between the feelings of isolation and lack of confidence and lack of faculty (or university) support found in previous studies (McDermid, Peters, Daly, & Jackson, 2016; Wyllie et al., 2016). The issues of confidence and support needed addressing as a means to retain nurse academics and also grow future leaders.

The findings from the systematic literature and Phase 1 were then incorporated into the program for early-career academic nurses (PECAN).

8.2.2 Phase 2: Strengthening a career mindset

The aim of Phase 2 was to implement and evaluate PECAN (see Chapter 5), a customised reflective program designed to facilitate ECANs' critical reflection on factors that were perceived to strengthen their role, gain career direction from experienced colleagues and lay foundations for the path ahead. Research studies have shown that the complexity of the journey and wide-ranging needs for the ECAN have been shown to be best driven by the individual (Sullivan, 2011), the complexity of the journey and wide-ranging needs however, require the faculty and educational providers to activate support to enable effective and timely development.

The findings from the evaluation in this study indicate that the ECANs viewed three elements of the PECAN as integral to supporting their career mindsets: the fostering of connections, strengthening of expertise and clarification of directions (Wyllie, Levett-Jones, DiGiacomo, & Davidson, 2020). Data analysis provided deep insights into the value of the PECAN in enhancing the types of collegial relationships that had the potential to galvanise career success. The program lessened the participants' feelings of isolation and helped them to develop abilities, attributes and behaviours that enhanced their career

resilience. The evaluation demonstrated that collegial support was crucial for strengthening the ECANs' belief in themselves and their accomplishments, and reinforced the attributes and abilities that fostered engagement with a career mindset.

The assistance of mentors have proven successful as a strategy to assist the ECANs to believe in themselves and their accomplishments (Halcomb et al., 2014). Such initiatives have however relied on the good will of experienced academics and with numbers dwindling due to retirement Bexley et al. (2011) new strategies are required. The ECANs also told of the 'hit and miss' nature of acquiring a mentor and would welcome some formal early supports that could be sustained (interviews 2).

8.2.3 Phase 3: Sustaining a career mindset

Phase 3 (Chapter 6) was designed to explore the qualities that sustained ECANs' career mindsets (Wyllie, Levett-Jones, DiGiacomo, & Davidson, 2021). An academic career takes time to evolve, as evidenced in Phases 1 and 2; therefore, as ECANs are nascent academic leaders, they need to find ways of fashioning career mindsets that can be sustained over time.

Phases 1 and 2 provided support for the need to explore the mindset ECAN journey. Phase 3 expanded on this work by exploring the ECANs' career journeys. The findings in Phase 3 reveal that deployment of a cluster of five distinctive habits of mind – reliance on self, taking responsible risks, thinking with colleagues, keeping an open mind, and possessing curiosity – were critical for sustaining the ECAN's career journeys.

The evidence in Chapter 6 identifies that the talents and abilities found in a growth mindset do not guarantee a career mindset, but require a set of intelligent behaviours or habits of mind to overcome whatever career challenges arise. For ECANs, the habits of mind described and defined in Chapter 6 offer a pathway for future learning and to sustainability of their career mindsets.

Scholarly literature and research studies on the dynamics and need for a career mindset has gained more attention due to growing recognition of how particular habits of mind

have been found to contribute to the growth of successful learning (Costa & Kallick, 2013) and how mindset traits can support career success (Heslin et al., 2019). A recent paper by (Clark & Sousa, 2018) stated that often *'growth, when it is prioritized, is seen as pertaining to work skills but seldom to the self'* (p. 28). Williams and Lewis (2021) argued that workplace cultures that are more focused on growing qualifications, expertise and status can lead to a fixed rather than a growth mindset, creating potential for a mismatch between workplace culture and individual needs.

According to (Clark & Sousa, 2018), cultures characterised by a fixed growth mindset stunts career growth because failures are not challenged. Similarly, Williams and Lewis (2021) although they wrote mostly about clinical rather than academic settings, argued that educational settings must value a growth mindset. They concluded, however, that empirical evidence for this contention remains scarce: most of the research they reviewed to date was mainly theoretical giving the findings from this study added value.

8.2.4 Phase 4: Stories of career progress

The narratives presented in Chapter 7 illustrate that as the ECANs' careers progressed, they sought to advance their academic standing through upskilling and putting time and effort into career elements that could drive personal growth, including work relationships. During this stage, the ECANs often sought advice and feedback from valued colleagues, and this was viewed as necessary to improving their mindsets. Similar to previous studies, mentorship can enhance retention and ongoing development (Brook, Aitken, Webb, MacLaren, & Salmon, 2019).

The ECANs' stories demonstrate accomplishments that are evidence of growing belief in themselves as academics and their ability to meet the challenges ahead. Some continued to question the academic nurse role, believing that it was still unfolding, and were uncertain about whether they were an 'early-career academic nurse' or 'early-career nurse academic'.

8.3 Significance of the study

A key strength of this study is its longitudinal design; data collection spanned two and a half years, from early 2017 until mid-2019. During the study, the ECANs shared their concerns, thoughts, fears and challenges, along with the strategies they employed to establish and maintain their academic careers. The interviews and the PECAN collaboratories were viewed as opportunities to reflect on their journeys, and gave them insight into and confidence in the value they brought to the higher education sector, along with the growth mindset required for success. Values, interests, strengths, personality and ambitions were all viewed as necessary for growth, given the opportunities available. Although workplace satisfaction was seen as important for sustaining their careers, it was their habits of mind that enabled them to stay on track and overcome the various barriers to success.

In the later part of the twentieth century, an academic career no longer takes the form of working for one institution for life (Holmgren, 2017). Career paths may unfold in many ways; as (Baruch & Reis, 2016) noted, career moves can be *'upwards, downwards, forwards, backwards, sideways or idiosyncratic'* (p. 15). Constructivist approaches, where the person is an active participant in the process of constructing their career give increased importance to training ECANs to adopt a flexible career mindset as early as possible, and the findings presented herein suggest that this should be a prominent part of their career management.

8.4 Implications of the findings

This research generated important insights into how ECANs can be supported to successfully build a career in academia and how ECANs bring long-term value to their organisations and the discipline. Although adoption of the three major strategies outlined herein – shaping career attitudes, increasing career adaptability, and implementing a mindset – can be viewed as a largely individual pursuit, ECANs need nurturing and support from the institutions that employ them and their academic colleagues, mentors and educators.

My findings may have a practical application for ECANs' employers, colleagues and mentors. While most institutions that employ ECANs still assume they will seek traditional careers; changes may bring alternative career moves for the ECANs and their 'new' significant career attitudes, abilities and adaptability may see new approaches to their workload. There are growing research projects reviewing the work pattern policy models in the Australian academic workplace. Many have use the so-called 40/40/20 per cent (teaching, research and community) and for some the policy is outdated. (Watson, King, Dekeyser, Baré, & Baldock, 2015).

ECANs should engage in continuous learning about new career attitudes and career adaptability at all career stages. Positive career attitudes in the workplace have been found to have a successful impact on career success (Grimland, Vigoda-Gadot, & Baruch, 2012). and adaptability will be of great importance to their future development, no matter their career direction or the unexpected transitions that come their way. As Hall (2004) stated, mastering new career attitudes, especially the ability to be adaptable in new environments is one of the two modern meta-competencies (the other being learning ability).

My findings show that the ECANs made steady progress in their career self-management behaviours. Implementing the right career self-management behaviours does not guarantee successful career outcomes (King, 2004), but cannot be viewed as other than helpful in the long term. For example, the key ingredients of a growth mindset – passion, persistence and effort, accompanied by a habits of mind disposition – were found to be vital to the ECANs' journeys. Together, they shaped, strengthened and sustained the ECANs' approaches to their careers. By uniting a growth mindset and habits of mind, and supported by a well-educated community, ECANs have the potential to become responsible for their own career building.

8.5 Limitations

The participants' ongoing investment in this longitudinal study and open expression of views gave authenticity and an in-depth understanding of the ECAN experience over time.

While the sample size was small, it was consistent with a qualitative longitudinal study approach (Calman et al., 2013) and allowed the rich data generated from 29 interviews to be analysed in a deep and meaningful way. Moreover, the nine participants represented a variety of ages and experiences, offering a broad cross-section of the ECAN population. Those who volunteered may have done so to vent feelings or to assist the researcher, who was a colleague; nevertheless, the study's design allowed both positive and negative experiences to be described. It should be noted that, although the literature shows similar patterns over the last 10 to 15 years, the changing academic environment means the findings may not represent the experiences of future ECANs. Finally, the research was limited to a single cohort at one Australian higher education institution, so may not be generalisable to other cohorts and discipline groups. Nonetheless, it adds to the growing body of literature on ECANs' experiences, and can be used to inform ECAN recruitment, orientation and support strategies.

8.6 Recommendations

8.6.1 Recommendation 1: Implement a Faculty Engagement and Development Committee

As outlined in Chapter 3, social constructionism emphasises that social worlds, such as higher education environments, are made real through structural and social processes that involve individuals. Implying that universities should provide support and commitment to assist new staff to engage with their role and construct an academic identity. Based on my findings, I argue that the process of shaping a career mindset should be supported early in an ECAN's career via establishment of an Engagement and Development Committee (EDC). There are challenges as many programs lack champions at a faculty level, funding may be scarce, but – according to Law et al. (2012) – a well-planned career mindset program can be cost-effective and assist in the development of academic identity and agency.

An orientation program is a one-time event, but research has shown that it can have a powerful impact on acclimatising to the environment, learning about new responsibilities

and opportunities that accompany their new academic role (Law et al., 2012). Staff who must learn the expectations of the university and faculty in the initial months of their employment have less time to define their academic identity and role, which are critical to personal and long-term job satisfaction. Thus, an effective orientation program is a valuable staff development asset.

The evaluation of PECAN (Chapter 5) was implemented as a face-to-face program prior to the onset of the COVID-19 epidemic in Australia. While academics appreciate the social contact, similar programs have been conducted successfully using online platforms (Nkimbeng, Cudjoe, Han, & Rodney, 2021) and face-to-face programs will not always be possible given the global nature of nursing and academia. Coupling an online version of PECAN with a three or six-month contact period with a work buddy may maximise the effect of the program. Research has shown that the costs of such programs are offset by increased ability to attract and retain academics (Kiel, 2020).

There is evidence that a strong, organised faculty orientation and development program focused on ECANs' needs also facilitates recruitment and improved staff satisfaction, and consequently, retention (Bagley, Hoppe, Brenner, & Weir, 2018). The EDC could conduct orientations for ECANs and coordinate all aspects of faculty staff development programs, including their identification, design and execution, and do so in coordination with other committees that decide on curriculum matters. Membership would need staff at various levels of experience, and students to keep it current and authentic. Key actions suggested for the EDC are listed below.

The adoption of an EDC would also go some way to addressing the ECANs needs as one of the participants stated at the second interview:

'we don't value the juniors enough ... there is no message of valuing staff ... we don't have the people that can maintain spirit; we don't have the coach,'
[Interview 2, March 2018]

Key actions for the Engagement and Development Committee:

- Develop an ECAN-specific orientation to the environment and the new role, including teaching, technology, community and research expectations.
- ‘Buddy’ ECANs with more experienced but similarly junior staff.
- Introduce ECANs, including their research histories and interests, to the staff.
- Integrate the ECANs into the faculty in ways that maximise use of their individual strengths.
- Offers an opportunity for the ECANs to have increased ‘voice and choice’ in their development.
- Create an ongoing development program that helps academics to shape a career mindset. It is best delivered face-to-face in the second year of employment, in groups of 6–10 (see Appendix 11 for details of an example).

8.6.2 Recommendation 2: Maintain a culture of faculty-wide collegiality

Previous research consistently underlines the contribution of strong collegial relationships to organisational success and effectiveness (Arnold, 2014). The concept is a complex one and not easy to define, according to Baporikar but he states that we ‘recognize it when we see it’ (Baporikar, 2015, p. 61). According to the ECANs, collegiality (as they recognised it) was underutilised as a strategy by the formal institutional system. The ECANs discussed it in the PECAN evaluations collaboratories as a ‘powerful substance’ that had clarified directions and one that strengthened their competence for their role.

There is a consistency with the findings in Phase 2 and the higher education that collegiality has positive effects for individual’s feelings of belonging (Baporikar, 2015; Schmidt, McNulty, Howard-Baptiste, & Harvey, 2017). The literature however, also points to collegiality as being vital to institutional success. In some cases calling on the concepts of mentorship and collegiality to be ‘critical friends’ (Hostetler, Hawley, Jordan, Levicky, & Mills, 2018, p. 18) as together the two concepts are more effective and have a longer life with the mentee more likely to go on to become a mentor.

It appears from this brief discussion that collegiality is an important variable of ECAN support and progress. A strategy that boosts collegiality resulting in greater success for

individuals and the faculty, deserves ongoing attention and maintenance. Creating a productive collegial climate within an institution, however, requires shared leadership and strategies that work toward capacity building social capital.

Major aims related to capacity building social capital:

- Effective social skills amongst staff.
- Greater support from colleagues.
- Provide opportunities for networking.
- Focus on social media networks.
- Keep in touch with former colleagues.

8.6.3 Recommendation 3: Foster a culture of faculty-wide collaboration with interdisciplinary links

The research literature confirms that there is a positive association between collaboration and academic progress (van der Wal, Thorogood, & Horrocks, 2021). Collaboration with a larger research network has also been correlated with obtaining more funding (Bloch & Sørensen, 2015), while publications with higher Altmetric scores have been shown to have more citations (Patel, Vaduganathan, Bhatt, & Bonow, 2018). Furthermore, the reputation of co-authors can facilitate publication in career-defining journals (van der Wal et al., 2021). By shaping funding, citation rates and reputation, collaborative behaviour could have a considerable impact on career progression in the disciplines who choose to collaborate.

The health literature indicates that interdisciplinary collaboration and research for nurse academics is growing in the post-COVID world, and will eventually lead to new models of collaborative care (Nkimheng et al., 2021). Interdisciplinary collaboration generates new ideas about old problems and allows researchers to discern converging evidence across disciplines (McBride, 2010). The topic of collaboration was of interest to the ECANs due to their focus on research as a component of progress and this interest should be fostered. Further, the experience of COVID-19 restrictions has underlined the urgency of

the need for a transdisciplinary approach to health research to share knowledge, skills and bring about more accurate care. This form of networking is too important to the transition into academia to be left to chance; institutions need to do more to assist academics to acquire the skills needed to be successful at collaboration and networking (Rienties & Hosein, 2020).

Outcomes from fostering a culture of faculty-wide collaboration and interdisciplinary

links:

- Opportunities for staff to consolidate effective local and international collaboration.
- Assist in the growth of international academic communities.

8.6.4 Recommendation 4: Promote Habits of Mind learning during the construction of a career disposition

The extent to which career-enabling attitudes and abilities yield positive career outcomes is contingent on an individual's habits in learning. Habits of mind can assist learners to construct intelligent behaviours (John Campbell, 2006) and build relationships in the workplace (Altan, Lane, & Dottin, 2019). In particular, the findings from Phase 3 indicate that learning habits such as taking charge of self, taking responsible risks, competently working with colleagues, keeping an open mind and possessing curiosity provide ECANs with a cluster of learning habits that have been deployed successfully to sustain a career mindset. By grounding these selected intelligent behaviours into their everyday work, they may usefully guide and support the professional construction of career building dispositions.

Given the strong links with educational theory habits of mind may provide the foundations of a strong educational environment for future ECANs. Also, by paying more attention to learning habits in undergraduate nursing programs they can prepare talented people for a career in academia. Habits of mind, introduced as a learning framework, can

introduce students early to the concept of building a career and what may be required to be successful in an academic career.

Suggested areas for embedding Habits of Mind learning:

- Curriculum development across the nursing spectrum of undergraduate and postgraduate.
- Higher education programs.
- In the development and enabling of competencies for ECANs.

8.6.5 Recommendation 5: Facilitation of growth mindset traits

The key ingredients of a growth mindset – a belief in one’s abilities, passion, persistence and effort, and a habits of mind disposition – were found to be vital to the ECANs’ journey. Together they shaped, strengthened and sustained the ECANs’ approaches to their careers. The study produced evidence that the ECANs work within an environment with a range of academics and educators from different backgrounds and experiences. In a recent paper (Clark & Sousa, 2018) have noted that the academic workplaces can also be prone to a fixed mindset where passion, persistence and effort get trumped by outputs, professional reputation and qualifications – behaviours that Dweck (2008) suggests may stifle thinking. For a growth mindset to flourish, awareness of behaviours that stifle thinking, when found, need attention by leadership. If ECANs are to be future leaders (discussed in Chapter 1.4.2) then growth mindsets require nurturing so that they in turn can influence future employees.

The facilitation of a growth mindset by leadership and educational providers may also be meaningful for the future of the ECANs role. The findings of Phase 1 show that for some ECANs, a meaningful career involves both clinical and academic roles. This is not yet a reality for Australian academic nurses, but recent literature (van Oostveen, Goedhart, Francke, & Vermeulen, 2017) highlights the underuse of nurse academics in the clinical area and the absence of supporting structures for nurses who want to combine clinical and academic work. A culture change would require leadership to promote and enable

combined research, teaching and clinical practice and introduce clinical academic career pathways for nurses.

Culture to produce growth mindset would:

- Embrace lifelong learning.
- Believe intelligence can be improved.
- Put in more effort to learn.
- Believe effort leads to mastery.
- Believe failures are just temporary setbacks.
- View feedback as a source of information.
- Willingly embraces challenges.
- View others' success as a source of inspiration.

8.7 Future research

This study fulfilled its aim to critically examine the career mindsets of a cohort of ECANs as they progressed through their careers. It is clear from the findings that connecting with mentors strongly influenced their journeys, but so did colleagues' support at important junctures. Instances of help from colleagues had powerful positive effects on the ECANs. ECANs met and received help from their colleagues in informal settings they described as communities, teams, clinical groups and centres, reducing their isolation, acquiring confidence and becoming accustomed to and understanding their environments and roles. However, the interview data shows clearly that mentors were crucial to the ECANs' career development; they understood the value of networking for support, but gravitated towards mentors for assistance in building their career attitudes and abilities and for advice about their future.

Recent literature has identified a gap in the literature on the impact of networking. (Heffernan, 2021). Heffernan is critical of research to date on the impact of networking, because it has been largely conducted in the field of management processes, it may be prudent in the interests of ECAN development for future researchers to study the

consequences of networking and networks for individual academics and the behaviours that drive networking. In other words, they should look at the human aspects of career development and what they mean for ECANs' careers and professional identities, with a view to implementing best practice networking in the higher education environment. A program based on such evidence may have prevented one of the participating ECANs (Pat) from leaving academia:

'I don't know how to 'push [my] profile, self-promote and have a network – I don't have that personality and feel that I won't progress without overcoming that'.

8.8 Conclusions

My research was designed to fill a gap in the literature: few previous researchers have utilised a longitudinal approach to explore academic mindsets, and to the best of my knowledge none has focused on ECANs' career journeys. Although many nursing faculties assume that ECANs' intelligence, previous experiences and resilience will facilitate career success, my study identified that the complexity of higher education and the myriad demands of academic work mean that this remains a difficult goal.

In today's higher education sector, ECANs must be clear and agile thinkers. Nonetheless, they need appropriate support to develop the abilities, attitudes and dispositions needed to overcome the challenges of career building. Higher education providers need to implement programs and supportive strategies that enhance the skills and abilities of ECANs to promote success and retain valuable staff.

When I commenced this thesis, better education seemed the answer to enhancing ECANs' understanding of the attitudes and habits needed to navigate a successful career journey. However, my findings show that as much as shaping, strengthening and sustaining a career mindset is important to an ECAN's journey, culture has a vital role to play. A wider net should be cast to include other academic narratives on a local and an international scale offering them the opportunity to tell what matters to them and to reflect upon the impact of these experiences' effects on their growth and development.

Another phase of profound global change is set to begin in 2022. Current challenges on employment, the impact of technology on knowledge and learning in higher education and declining public funding relative to gross domestic product. Continual changes in higher education place unrelenting pressure on ECANs to adapt and forge successful academic careers. The current cohort of ECANs should rise into academic and nursing research leadership over the next 10–15 years, so their career development should be a well-defined element of their universities' strategic directions.

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APPENDIX 1: Conference abstracts

A REAL orientation: a program designed to give early career academic nurses career confidence

Aileen Wyllie, Director of Undergraduate Nursing, University of Technology Sydney¹, NSW; **Tracy Levett-Jones**, Professor of Nursing Education, University of Technology, NSW; **Michelle DiGiacomo**, Senior Research Fellow, University of Technology, NSW; Professor **Patricia Davidson**, Dean School of Nursing, Johns Hopkins University, USA²

Background and Aim

Academics are increasingly required to take charge of their own career pathway in a sector that is becoming more demanding and competitive. Early career academic nurses have been recognised as a particularly vulnerable group as they transition into the tertiary sector. A result of a non-traditional trajectory into academic life and a lack of understanding of what is involved in the 'craft of academia' (Halcomb et al., 2014). This study was designed to optimise key attitudes and skills enabling novice nurse academics to gain career confidence. This paper presents details of an innovative professional development program titled: 'P-ECAN' which focusses on academic career 'relationships', 'engagement', 'awareness' and 'leadership'.

Methods

A four-phase appreciative inquiry approach was undertaken in a leading Australian university. Eleven early career academic nurses took part and ethics obtained. Phase one consisted of in-depth semi-structured interviews which underpinned the design of phase two, a series of five collaboratories and phase three interviews offered an opportunity to capture the post-collaboratory participants' experiences. Phase four concludes late 2019.

Results

Four overarching themes were identified in phase one; *Understanding Expectations, Becoming Savvy, Introducing Enablers* and *Establishing Essentials* and drove the design of 'P-ECAN'. Results of the collaboratory evaluations will be presented at the conference.

Conclusion

The evaluation results will assist in future programs for early career academic nurses and allow for broader adoption in nursing and other healthcare disciplines.

Wyllie, A. Levett-Jones, T. DiGiacomo, M, & Davidson, P. 2018, A REAL orientation: a program designed to give early career academic nurses career confidence, *NNEC 17th National Nurses Education Conference: Changing worlds*, May 1-4, 2018 Melbourne

Wyllie, A. Levett-Jones, T. DiGiacomo, M, & Davidson, P. 2018, P-ECAN – designing a Program to maximise career planning for Early Career Academic Nurses, *NETNEP 2018 – 7th International Nurse Education Conference*, May 6-9, 2018, Banff, Canada.

P-ECAN – designing a Program to maximise career planning for Early Career Academic Nurses

Abstract:

A body of literature has reported on the rapidly changing nature of academic work environments (Bexley et al., 2011), the global shortage of nursing academics (Nardi & Gyurko, 2013), the ageing academic workforce (Norton, Sonnemann, & Cherastidtham, 2013), and challenges related to recruitment and retention (Bexley et al., 2013). Thus, there is an urgent need to support, grow, enable and empower novice nursing academics so that they are strategically positioned to assume much needed leadership positions. This requires a commitment to professional development, strategic planning and individual determination, as well as high level institutional and faculty support (Bexley et al., 2011).

To address the identified needs an innovative professional development program titled 'P-ECAN' was designed, implemented and evaluated at one Australian University. P-ECAN refers to a Program to maximise career planning for Early Career Academic Nurses. The P-ECAN was informed by a four-phase appreciative inquiry approach. It began with in-depth semi-structured interviews that explored the career building experiences of the academics. Following on from the interviews, in phase two, a series of six collaboratories were undertaken, each designed to address areas of importance to the participants, while at the same time providing a collegial and enjoyable forum for interaction and mutual support. Results will be presented at the conference of how the data from phase one informed the educational development of the modular program. A program designed to capacity build the novice academics career progression by exploring the nature of 'being strategic', learning the 'craft' of academia, fostering relationships, building resilience and maximising influence in their early career portfolio.

Phase three of the study concludes early 2018. In this phase of P-ECAN, participants' experiences of post-collaboratories are being evaluated. In particular, the extent to which the intervention provided a nurturing and empowering experience and facilitated self-awareness, self-efficacy, and early career progression. The evaluation results will assist in future program development and allow for broader adoption both in nursing and in other healthcare disciplines.

APPENDIX 2: Ethics acceptance and extension

Dear Applicant

UTS HREC REF NO. ETH16-0948

The UTS Human Research Ethics Expedited Review Committee reviewed your amendment application for your project titled, "Early Career Academic Nurses journey of *shaping, strengthening and sustaining* a career mindset: *The Pilgrim's Progress* with apologies to John Bunyan", and agreed that the amendments meet the requirements of the NHMRC National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). I am pleased to inform you that the Committee has approved your request to amend the protocol as follows:

1. Include and interview early career academic nurses who have left the Faculty in the past twelve months.
2. Addition of the following open-ended questions for non-current employees of the Faculty of Health:
 - What do you believe is required to effectively fulfil the early academic nurse role?
 - Prior to employment as an early career academic nurse, what expectations did you have about what skills would help you build a career?
 - In your view, what skills have been the most helpful to you thus far and why?
 - In what ways do you think early career academic nurses can best be supported in their career progression?
 - What career planning resources do you think are important to assist early academic nurses? What do you believe needs to be done to make this happen?
 - If you had a magic wand, what would you as a nurse who has experienced an academic role, wish for in career support? (Appreciative inquiry section on 'dreaming' or 'thinking outside the square')
 - What measures do you think early career academic nurses use as evidence of successful career development?

You should consider this your official letter of approval. If you require a hardcopy please contact the Research Ethics Officer (Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au).

In the meantime, I take this opportunity to wish you well with the remainder of your research.

Yours sincerely,

Associate Professor Beata Bajorek
Chairperson
UTS Human Research Ethics Committee
C/- Research & Innovation Office
University of Technology, Sydney
E: Research.Ethics@uts.edu.au

APPENDIX 3: Recruitment letter



****PRINTED ON UTS (and/or joint) LETTERHEAD****

INVITATION LETTER

The Early Career Academic Nurse: using a customised self-directed program as a mechanism for critical reflection and career planning

Dear Colleague

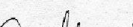
I am conducting research into improving the experiences of nurses transitioning into early career positions within the Faculty of Health at UTS.

I invite you to be a part of a new pilot program designed to make you comfortable and to thrive in the academic role. Participation includes two semi-structured interviews and several workshops where you will interact with colleagues in a relaxed atmosphere, to:

- *make the most* of organisational support
- *identify and adopt* attributes necessary for success
- *embrace* self-management to create a locus of control

Nurses in a new academic role are exposed to constant demands; faculty/student expectations, the discipline itself, the public and the university. It is all too easy to lose sight of the very career aspirations that brought you into the tertiary education sector. Early career academic nurses need a customised program / strategy to orchestrate their own career.

If you are interested in participating, please reply to this email. For more information and my supervisor's details refer to the attached information sheet. Be assured that you are under no obligation to take part.

Yours sincerely, 

Production Note:
Signature removed
prior to publication.

Aileen Wyllie
PhD student, University of Technology Sydney

APPENDIX 4: Participant information sheet



INFORMATION SHEET

The Early Career Academic Nurse: using a customised self-directed program as a mechanism for critical reflection and career planning

WHO IS DOING THE RESEARCH?

My name is Aileen Wyllie. I am a PhD student at UTS in the Faculty of Health. My principal supervisor is Dr Michelle DiGiacomo and other members of the supervisory team are Professor Debra Jackson, Professor Patricia Davidson and Professor Jane Phillips.

WHAT IS THIS RESEARCH ABOUT?

This research is focused on the Early Career Academic Nurse (ECAN) role and explores what support mechanisms lead to success in the planning of a career in academia. In particular, I am interested in ascertaining information about what skills and capabilities have proven effective and will assist other nurses who take up an ongoing position as an academic.

IF I SAY YES, WHAT WILL IT INVOLVE?

I will be asking you to participate in a four-phase study. Phases 1, 2 and 3 involve three semi-structured one-hour one-to-one audio-taped interviews. Phase 2 involves your attendance at six two-hour interactive collaboratories, once a month for six months where lunch will be provided. The collaboratories are designed to provide educational input on areas important to career development: career needs and planning; growth development and resilience; reflective practice; life work balance; change management and approaches to leadership. The three interviews and collaboratories occur over intervals of approximately 28 months. Interviews to commence in February 2017 and followed by the collaboratories to commence tentatively October 2017 and into mid-2018. Dates will be finalised for the second and third interviews as soon as possible following recruitment. Online materials will be made available for participants.

ARE THERE ANY INCONVENIENCE/RISKS?

I appreciate that your time is very valuable. One inconvenience, is the approximate 18 hours that you will spend over 28 months participating in the collaboratories and interviews. The faculty has granted permission for time taken during your workday for the interviews and collaboratories. The interviews and collaboratories will take place in the university and the researcher will strictly adhere to university ethical protocols throughout the study. Collaboratories are not audio-taped and all written documents taken during interviews and following collaboratories will be submitted to participants for a period of two weeks for verification of accuracy of content.

WHY HAVE I BEEN ASKED?

I am asking for your participation because as an ECAN you have current experience and understanding of how ECANs self-manage career development and what may be valuable to, and supportive of, future ECANs.

DO I HAVE TO SAY YES?

You do not have to participate.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I SAY NO?

Nothing. I will thank you for your time so far and will not contact you about this research again.

IF I SAY YES, CAN I CHANGE MY MIND LATER?

You can change your mind at any time and you do not have to say why. I will thank you for your time so far and will not contact you about this research again.

WHAT IF I HAVE CONCERNS OR A COMPLAINT?

If you have concerns about the research that you think I or my supervisors can help you with, please feel free to contact Aileen Wyllie on 02 9514 4681 or my supervisor Dr Michelle DiGiacomo on 02 9514 4818). If you would like to talk to someone who is not connected with the research, you may contact the Research Ethics Officer on 02 9514 9772, and quote this number (ETH16-0948).

APPENDIX 6: Interview 1 questions

Draft of Semi-Structured Interview Questions

Interview 1 of ECAN Project – UTS

Interview schedule

Introduction/Informed consent

Thank you for meeting with me. My name is Aileen Wylie. I am a nurse in the faculty of Health UTS. This interview is the first of two and is to assist me in my PhD research which has been sanctioned by the Human Ethics Committee at UTS (number ETH16-0948). As an Early Career Academic Nurse or ECAN I am interest in what skills, behaviours and capabilities you are finding of value in your role as an ECAN and for your academic career. Plus, what you would recommend to future ECANs.

For this research an ECAN can be described as:

- emerging academic who is a registered nurse
 - within 7 years of obtaining an ongoing university position
- or
- within seven (7) years of commencing an academic career (allows for any unavoidable disruptions);
 - employed in a fixed ongoing position;
 - employed into the position on merit and,
 - one year into, or have completed a doctorate.

Please note that your participation in the interview is entirely voluntary, and you can choose to discontinue your involvement in the study at any time. I will not be collecting nor recording any personally identifiable information on you. Any information that is identifiable will not be used without your permission. The interview will be audiotaped so that the information that you give can be accurate when analysed and published. Also, it helps not to have the distraction of taking notes and I can effectively listen. There will also be a second interview and five collaboratories to attend. Notifications will be sent by email about future events. Is that okay with you? Do you have any questions?

Interview Questions:

A) Personal Questions

How long have you been on staff? _____

Did you have an orientation? _____ Yes _____ No

If yes, by Faculty or the University _____ UTS _____ Faculty of Health _____ Both

Probes: What do you remember about the orientation? How long? What did you learn? How as it helped you in your academic role? Did it include helpful 'tips' toward your academic career?

In your view what/who has been the most helpful to you thus far? Why do think that was? What has been the least helpful?

B) Role/Identity and Career Questions

Why ask these questions?

A 'well-grounded and focussed' ECAN is essential for the growth and development of the students, the organisation, the discipline and the faculty.

Tell me what is required to fulfil the ECAN role? What is important for you?

Probe: What is involved for the organisation? What is involved for you to develop e.g. promotion, leadership role? What is involved for the discipline e.g. advancing scholarship? What involvement do ECANs have with students e.g. Support, teaching etc.

Who or What has helped or helps you to develop in the ECAN role? How has it or they helped? If you had to divide the 'helpful features' into the following categories (hand out cards to respondent)

- other academics
- policies/procedures
- administration
- self-management skills

And, you had 40 points to award, how would you distribute them among each of these categories?

What attitudes and behaviours do you think are important for effectively fulfilling the role?

Have these differed or changed since you commenced in the role? Are these different from those that you need to be successful in planning a career in academia?

What does the construct of 'career development' mean for you?

C) Self-Efficacy Questions

Why ask these questions?

Self-efficacy improves beliefs and achievements; the ability to achieve and commitment to achieve. The more capable that the ECAN judges themselves to be, then the more challenging will be their goals and the more likely to be successful in building a career.

Prior to employment did you have expectations about what strategy/s would help you build a career in academia? Can you tell me about it/them?

What do you see have been your main work challenges as an ECAN?

How have you made sense of these challenges?

What qualities/behaviours do you believe you bring to be effective in the role?

Probe: What behaviours may be associated with, or displayed when being self-effective? Is it something you recognise in yourself? Or Others' tell you? Some qualities are belief in oneself, able to achieve and commit to achieve, verbally able to express goals, try, has persistence and emotionally content ...

Who or What would you say is/has been most influential to you in your career planning?

Probe: prior to becoming an ECAN i.e. clinical educator, role model, mentor, colleagues, community, the UTS support systems or staff

How do you keep an account of the knowledge/history accumulated about your strengths or plans?

Probe: Do you write them down in your development plan? Keep a diary/journal? Discuss with other colleagues but do not write down? Take notice only of some? Which ones and why?

If there you had a wish list ... what would help you most in developing as an ECAN?

Probe: Appreciate Inquiry... section on 'dreaming' 'thinking outside the square'

D) Cultural and Organisational Questions

Why ask these questions?

Research has shown that for those who want to be one which allows the person to be multidirectional, dynamic and fluid

What in the workplace has had an impact or influence on your career plan?

What organisational resources are important to your development?

What has been surprising to you working as an academic?

E) General

Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

Thank you for participating in this interview. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Committee Please Note: That the Interview questions for PHASE 3 will be formulated as a result of the experiences of PHASE 1 & 2 but some questions will be asked about the portfolio as a mechanism to prompt in building a career. For example:

In what way/s was the portfolio framework useful act as a strategy or mechanism for you?

1. What qualities influenced your engagement with and preferences for using the portfolio framework?
2. To what extent were these perceptions related to career interventions and timeframe?
3. Which artefacts did the ECANs perceive best portrayed their development?
4. How important was peer/community support?

APPENDIX 7: Interview 2 questions

Questions

Open-ended questions that asked about participants' thoughts, feelings and experiences of the program and impact of the program on their academic development and career. The journal notes assisted to prompt areas of relevance during the collaborative sessions.

A) Introductory

Briefly, tell me about one or two program experiences?

(Warm up questions. Make the person comfortable and get them to 'reconnect' with the program)

B) Program

Can you tell me what aspects of this program was the most developmentally satisfying/helpful? What did you feel about the collaboratories? What did you think about the booklet? Any surprises about the program?

Probes and prompts: Did you feel stimulated? Supported? In what way/s? By whom? Did you continue to use the booklet? How? When?

(Why ask these questions? Appropriateness: To what extent does the program address needs identified from the first interview? How well does the program align with ECAN needs?)

C) Career development

In your view what has been the most helpful to your career development? Probes: Why do think that was? Did anything in the program assist? And, in what way

Why ask these questions? To what extent is the program achieving the intended outcomes, in the short, medium and long term? To what extent is the program producing worthwhile results (outputs, outcomes) and/or meeting each of its objectives? Effectiveness A program that can help to develop the ECAN can assist in the growth and development of the students, organisation, discipline and the faculty.

D) General

Is there anything else you would like to tell me? Anything you would have liked included in the program? Changed? What has been surprising?

APPENDIX 8: Interview 3 questions

The open-ended questions asked participants to think about and reflect on the qualities and actions that had assisted them with their career growth. In particular *what* helped and *how* they had learnt. Previous journal notes from phase one and two assisted to prompt areas of relevance during the interview.

Q. What has been the most satisfying accomplishment currently in your development? Tell me about it.

Why these questions? As an introductory question to make them feel at ease. When people are invited to tell a story about what's been important the interviewer gets a sense of what matters to them. Did they value the impact they had? The interviewer has an opportunity to see their motivators and their success or improvement markers. The question also focusses the interviewee on 'current development'.

Q. What are a couple of issues have you had to stop and think about lately to move forward career development?

Why this question? It offers a chance to learn about their current situation, the areas of importance and focuses attention to the interviewee about themselves as *developers* and *learners* with responsibilities. Brings learning to the fore.

Q. How did it/they move your development forward? What skills and qualities did you use?

Why these questions? Encourages talk on thinking. For the interviewer to try and understand how the participant moves through thinking; and what skills and qualities were applied at that time. Knowledge useful for future support programs.

Q. Tell me two or three things that have routinely continued to assist development?

Why this question? This question is a way to understand what is needed to assist growth and areas of support that can be introduced for sustaining development.

Q. Is there anything else that you would like to tell me?

Why this question? Chance for the interviewee to mention anything missed or just occurred to them. Helps to feel like completion of the interview.

APPENDIX 9: Interviewer reflective log, an example

Personal Notes DP 14.02.17

To reflect on interview skills and identify areas of improvement; consider validity of information – This was my first interview and I felt rather apprehensive (my colleague who had a recent PhD). I didn't want to

- feel awkward – had practised and sought feedback on questions from supervisor
- not be able to listen well enough. Interview reviewed for feedback by supervisor Associate Professor DiGiacomo for her expertise in Qualitative research
- questions not tight enough
- would not have enough to ask
- rush through questions
- be probing enough

Post interview reflections:

- told me made them I made her feel comfortable
- I was a natural – I felt she was helping and supporting me
- Could go on if I wanted?
- Lasted 1 hour 10 mins

Access to informant – colleague through ethics and EMT

Planning for the interview. How did you introduce yourself?

- Initial arrangements through an email invite by neutral person (Priya)
- At interview as a PhD student – did not say my first interview though it may have been obvious
- Not there as my role of director of UG
- They were welcome to say anything
- They would have a chance to review the comments
- Names would be edited
- Confidentiality maintained of information – nothing to denote them
- First question about themselves and how they felt
- Second their employment history
- Did they have an orientation in the Faculty? UTS?
- Consent signed at the time – copy given later

Were the arrangements for the time, place and recording of the interview appropriate?

- Email was used to determine a convenient time for the interview for both of us as we were at work – permission granted by EMT
- Invite through calendar entry with date, time and place – no mention of reason for privacy just a meeting

Rapport. How well did you get along with your informant? Did you like each other?

- Collegial – not work directly work with participant

- Have assisted in helping them in their role as coordinator and director into the faculty
- Mutual respect was apparent in language and in posture – she was smiling and nodding, ‘happy to answer and questions’
- Information flyer offered again (sent in the original invite) but they declined to read. ‘I trust you’ – this made me feel obliged to do the best I could in the study.

Did you understand each other? Did you feel comfortable with each other and the topic being discussed?

- Could be the potential for some sensitive information surfacing
- She made me feel at ease and gave me feedback about how well I was doing as we went through the interview
- She was honest on many occasions about her experiences
- Felt like a ‘mutual’ relationship
- Did not refuse to answer
- Was told she could leave at any time

Sampling. How and why did you select this informant?

- Met the criteria for the study
- Answered the email invite

Description of the informant. What sort of person is the informant? What are the informant's circumstances?

- Mature age
- Been employed on an ongoing contract in the faculty for ...
- Recent PhD – no career ambitions as such...

How do you think you were perceived by the informant? (e.g. as a person of authority, as a friend or ally, as a man or woman)

- I felt an ally
- Mutual colleague in a large institution going through many changes
- Someone who supports staff and wants to improve those employed

Suitability of the interview setting. Was it a neutral place for the informant? Were you and the informant comfortable physically and emotionally? Was the location free of noise and disruptions? Did you have privacy?

- Booked room where quiet, reasonably comfortable i.e. air conditioning and
- Room was arranged prior to interview – small flowers, ornament, water and some chocolates
- Audio-tape was quite suspicious but we soon forgot about it
- Toilet nearby
- I was there before she came
- Door locked at all times
- I faced the door and window so that it could remain private
- During break so few staff or students around

Timing. Were you or the informant under time pressure? Were you both relaxed and attentive, able to concentrate on the interview?

- No time pressures evident
- I felt when the interview had run its course and ended it
- Time to exchange a few words after words about life and work

Interaction. Was your interview technique satisfactory? Were you pushing an agenda or frame of reference? Were your questions leading or biased? Were your questions clear? Did the informant appear to be comfortable, or as if they were? nervous, distracted, or the subject of an interrogation? Did you introduce technical terms or use the language of the informant? Did the interaction go smoothly?

- I could be clearer in asking questions – my style is a little lay back
- Language was clear to both
- No nerves and was glad that someone had taken the time to listen to her first experiences to the Faculty – was a coordinator of a subject as soon as she started
- I did give some personal examples and opinions. I did restate and clarify, which, at the time I worried about (was I “contaminating” the data?). Discussed later with supervisors – the transcripts were fine but I my questions were too lengthy – I was worried about the silence after the question.

Recording and note taking. Were there any problems with the tape recording or in your note taking? Were both you and your informant comfortable with these processes?

- Tape recorder – first time no chance of fail, set up by a faculty member (Patrick)
- He gave me some lessons
- I brought some extra batteries
- Tested the tape beforehand i.e. after a little small talk
- Listened directly afterwards
- Helped by Patrick to download onto my computer
- Saved two copies

Exit. Were you able to complete the interview and exit gracefully? Were both you and the informant happy at the end of the interview? Would you be able to contact? the informant again to follow up on any questions which may arise later on?

- I did not make this point clear about follow-up – I missed this but
- Participant said I could if there was an issue
- ?? need to ask questions

APPENDIX 10: Reflective journal entry, an example

Following first collaboratory which set the tone for following sessions.

Discussion Topic: career navigating and self-support

Discussion question: How does the individual 'navigate' and 'manage' the system to progress a career?

I felt strange in the role of observer. It was another identity – already had two with my role in the faculty, my role as a doctoral student and now facilitating the collaboratories. Keen to get the group relaxed. Lunch came first with the guest speaker and the venue had a space for eating and relaxing and then discussion in a separate area with sofas where the discussion took place (see picture below) – rules were set and stuck pretty much – importantly this one '*everything said in the room, stays in the room*'. Need to be free to talk.

A fun thing ice breaker was naming the cat who was curled up in a basket in front of the fire (not real but the cat could purr and move slightly – great for relaxing as everyone picked him up and stroked him – we named him Felix.

I wanted something helpful for the participants to take away given the time they gave so, the aim was for them to learn from each other and I would listened to the conversations and make notes to gain knowledge of what assisted or impacted on career growth ... be it personal qualities, actions or other people. No time to stop and interrupt the flow of conversations. My notes would help with the second one-to-one interviews where I could make some clarifications.

Notes:

- PhD entry point seemed general consensus
- Imposter syndrome mention by three people – a few did not know the meaning and it was briefly discussed
- Career serendipity – seemed common or career passion research, not stay in the university system too long 'I have another twenty years work so will move soon too/hierarchy too much'
- Academia a privilege and not forget that ...
- qualities needed – trust/values/motivation/passion/resilience/ used to messiness/generosity/creativity/negotiation skills
- Approach – proactive/good relationships also international/team/mentor (more than one for development one for research – different relationships)/deliberate/work hard/look after yourself
- Environment – cultural shift for new staff support/inclusion/zone for comfort/need dual role too isolated from clinical

The collaboratory discussion space



Whilst the study was not conceived in emancipatory terms, engaging in written critical self-reflection had made me aware that I did want to do something practical which the participants would see as useful to them, and which would provide some answers to the problems associated with career progression. I also sensed that the participants thought this research would help them understand the issues and what would help them make changes and improvements; a sense that I had recorded in my journal above. At the same time, I was fully conscious of what had led me to the research and the subjective position in which this placed me, as a reflection recorded in my research journal illustrates. I was fired up to do this topic because I felt that there was much that could be done to assist ECANs. I wanted to boost their confidence in themselves as well as reveal the issues. That was, and to some extent still is, my agenda, my bias. I imagined that I might get support for this from those who offer their time and experience. Obviously, this might not happen instantly but over time as more support strategies are introduced.

APPENDIX 11: PECAN

(P-ECAN)

A Program for
Early Career Academic Nurses

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Introduction

Welcome to the program. We hope that you will find it beneficial. The program has been designed to stimulate early career academic nurses to appreciate that fulfilling their expected academic portfolio requires skillful self-planning and sustained effort. The faculty and university can support and assist in career construction and put processes in place to help facilitate success; however, to achieve your portfolio goals you need to be the driving force. To achieve this it is recommended that you engage early in your career progression.

Successful career progression starts with understanding 'context', 'opportunities', 'relationships', 'self' and 'influences'. As a career-resilient academic you can learn to take advantage of meaningful and career enhancing experiences as part of a daily routine. Career-resilient academics are more likely to become dedicated to continuous learning, academic growth and having a well-rounded career life balance. They are also ready to reinvent themselves in order to keep pace with the changing needs of their career progression.

An academic role exposes you to many constant demands on your time: from faculty, students, discipline and societal expectations. It is often easy to lose sight of the very career aspirations that brought you into the higher education sector. The program will encourage you to develop attitudes that are central to the current thinking on early career portfolio development in a supported, safe and deliberate manner.

P-ECAN offers academics:

- a practical structure for academic reflection, and evaluation,
- activities that are designed to help focus on career progress,
- an adjunct to support the development of their portfolio,
- well-formed career issues to discuss with mentor/s and supervisor,
- an opportunity to critically discuss career progression with those who have been successful, in their career progression as a nurse academic.

P-ECAN program: there are three sections

Section 1: five modules and each consist of:

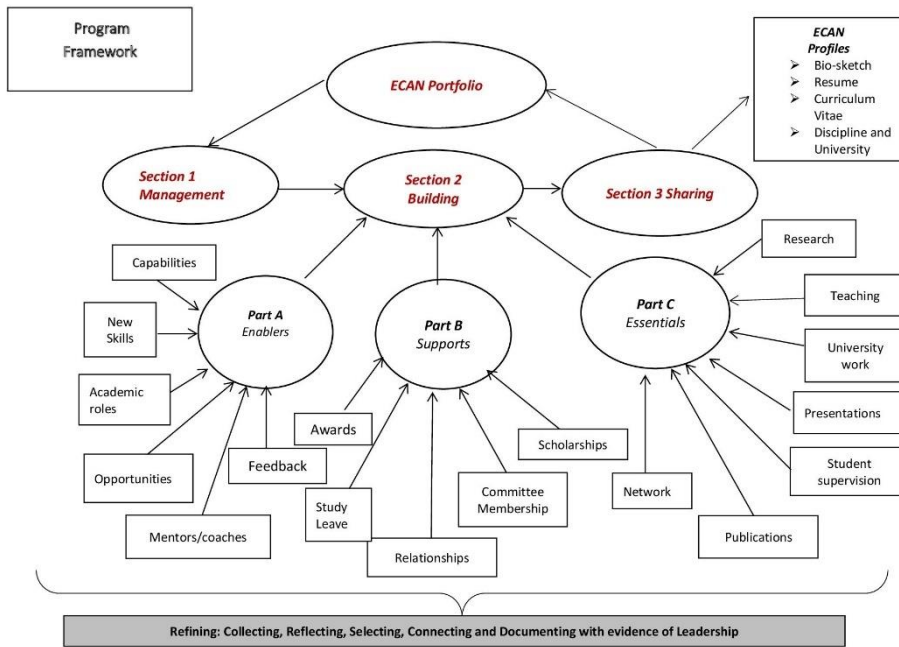
- pre-collaboratory activities designed for completion prior to the relevant collaboratories i.e. pre-collaboratory one completed before attending collaboratory one and so forth. The intent of the preparation is to maximise interaction, learning and creating ideas for action,
- an overall aim for the module,
- a career progression challenge or skill to be discussed,
- post-collaboratory activities to re-inforce and encourage self-management career progression.

Section 2: offers a portfolio framework that allows for collecting, reflecting and selecting artefact that gives evidence of development over time.

Section 3: allows for customising profiles that are appropriate, relevant, current and ready to submit for differing professional needs.

Processes Underpinning the Program





**SECTION 1:
Portfolio Management**

Collaboratory Overview: Capacity Building Your Approach to Career Progression

Educational Development	Module 1 Being Strategic	Module 2 The 'Crafting' of An Academic	Module 3 Fostering Relationships	Module 4 Building Resilience	Module 5 Maximising Influence
Modular Aims	Aim: Explore the current academic landscape and examine career progression support mechanisms	Aim: Expedite the academic career planning and development processes to enable appropriate goals	Aim: Enhance healthy and effective mutual working relationship with Faculty colleagues	Aim: Adopt the elements required to be resilient researcher in an academic environment	Aim: Making plans, and critically collecting evidence for taking a nursing leadership role in academia
Pre-collaboratory Activity Sets designed to focus on progressing the ECAN portfolio	Focusing on career progression Activity 1: What counts as progress? Activity 2: Readings – reviewing the landscape of academia	Exploring abilities & motivation Activity 1: What does an academic do? Activity 2: Your thoughts Activity 3: Ask a colleague? Activity 4: Needs Activity 5 & 6: What motivates?	Connecting with colleagues Activity 1: Current reality check on collegial supports Activity 2: Current reality check on your career relationships Activity 3: Mentorship and career progression?	Resilience and you Activity 1: Testing time management Activity 2: Testing resilience Activity 3: Boosting resilience Activity 4: Reading and resources	Future plans Activity 1: Skills that result in development Activity 2: Video, TED talk
Collaboratory Face-to-face topical discussions	Career navigation & self-support: To explore with a group of ECAN colleagues their navigating of the career system and to what extent self-management can give confidence and so increase performance Aims & Objectives p.11	Capabilities required: To explore with a group of ECAN colleagues the experiences and capabilities that are shaping a successful ECAN portfolio Aims & Objectives page 20	A working relationship: To explore with a group of ECAN colleagues strategies that establish a productive relationship with your mentor/s Aims & Objectives page 29	Resilience in practice: To explore with a group of ECAN colleagues the supports and skills necessary to sustain a research portfolio Aims & Objectives page 37	Progressing a career: To explore with a group of ECAN colleagues thoughts on career planning, documentation and making the most of opportunities in Academia Aims & Objectives page 44
Post-collaboratory activity sets consolidating modules	Scanning the environment Activity: The three stages of environmental scanning	Documenting needs Activity 1: Exploring expectations Activity 2: Similarities & differences Activity 3: Managing progress	Reflection as a critical tool Activity 1: Networking Activity 2: About feedback Activity 3: Reading	Wellbeing and academics Activity 1: Are you headed for an energy crisis? Activity 2: Current reality check on time management Activity 3: Reading and video, TED talk	Making plans Activities 1 & 2: Short term goal setting Activity 3: Selecting artefacts Activity 4: Supports needed Activity 5: Reading
Post module recommended resources	Located page 15 Summary: A focus on strategies in the progression of a progressing a career.	Located page 23 Summary: A focus on academic adjustment and the attributes and competencies necessary to flourish.	Located page 32 Summary: A focus on reflection and feedback as sound and effective learning tools.	Located page 41 Summary: A focus on wellbeing whilst working in academia.	Located page 49 Summary: Portfolio documentation and refining to focus on evidence of leadership

Module 1: Being Strategic

Aim: To explore the current academic landscape and examine career progression support mechanisms

Pre-Collaboratory 1 - Focusing on progress

Differentiating between job and career

Having a career is different from having a job (Table 1). A job offers the opportunity to make a contribution. It is a contract with you and your employer involving a series of education, experiences, jobs, contacts and obligations. A career on the other hand is, a planned personal commitment based on your own particular interests, values and personality: then matched with opportunities that you have from your employer and your own lifestyle. If you want a satisfying and fulfilling career then it is recommended that you put in a management plan that affords you maximum influence on your career. In order to prepare a plan first you need to scan the environment, use your judgement to prioritise your current needs and make plans to accomplish them in a given timeframe.

Table 1: Job versus career

Job	Career
Contract between you and your employer	Commitment you make to yourself
Reactive	Proactive
Other-directed	Self-directed
Choice based on immediate needs	Choice based on short term goals (with long term in mind if appropriate)
Leaving depends on lifestyle choice	Leaving depends on opportunity to further your goals

Adapted from (Sullivan 2013, p. 130)

Activity One: What counts as progress?

Link to UTS Career and professional development

<https://staff.uts.edu.au/topic/sub/Pages/Manage%20my%20employment/Career%20and%20professional%20development/Academic%20progression/academic-progression.aspx>

Activity Two: The academic environment

To maximise the discussion during the first collaboratory please read the following papers – see next over. The papers are four papers. There are also three larger papers with more details that give excellent information but too large to print.

Papers included in the folder

- Bexley, E., Arkoudis, S. & James, R. 2013, 'The motivations, values and future plans of Australian academics', *Higher Education*, vol. 65, no. 3, pp. 385-400.
- Buchan, J., O'May, F. & Dussault, G. 2013, 'Nursing workforce policy and the economic crisis: a global overview', *J Nurs Scholarsh*, vol. 45, no. 3, pp. 298-307.
- Coates, H. & Goedegebuure, L. 2012, 'Recasting the academic workforce: Why the attractiveness of the academic profession needs to be increased and eight possible strategies for how to go about this from an Australian perspective', *Higher Education*, vol. 64, no. 6, pp. 875-89.
- Nardi, D.A. & Gyurko, C.C. 2013, 'The global nursing faculty shortage: status and solutions for change', *J Nurs Scholarsh*, vol. 45, no. 3, pp. 317-26.

Studies and Research

Bexley E, James, R & Arkoudis

http://www.hru.uts.edu.au/docs/forum/bexley_james_arkoudis.pdf
https://minerva-access.unimelb.edu.au/bitstream/handle/11343/28921/264673_GoedegebuureAttractiveness.pdf?sequence=1

Coates, H. & Goedegebuure, L. 2010, 'The real academic revolution', *Research Briefing Report*, LHMartin Institute.

http://www.lhmartininstitute.edu.au/userfiles/files/research/the_real_academic_revolution.pdf

Halcomb, E., Andrew, S., Peters, K., Salamonson, Y., Daly, J., Jackson, D. & Gray, J. 2014, 'Supporting Career Progression through Academic Mentorship (STREAM): Final Report of the Project Developing and Implementing a Leadership Capacity Building Program for Teaching and Learning in Nursing', *Office for Learning and Teaching, Sydney, NSW, Australia*.

UTS Teaching and Development

<http://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/teaching-and-learning/developing-your-academic-career/new-staff-induction-0>

Collaboratory 1: Career navigation and self-support		
<p>Aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an effective approach to the academic environment and to enable the academic to flourish Create a collaborative hub for novice academics <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide the rules for meeting and collaborative work Build knowledge of the changing academic architecture and landscape Critically discuss what is required for role satisfaction and career progress Afford the opportunity to discuss with a leading nurse academic about the changes in nursing academia and possibilities for progress <p>Andragogical Approach to Learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboratories have been described an open space, creative process where a group of people work together to generate solutions to complex problems (Muff 2014) Collaborative learning assumes that knowledge is socially, rather than individually constructed by communities of individuals (Novotny, Seifert & Werner 1991). Collaborative learning can offer the novice nurse academic the opportunity to activate personal careers and during the process will also maximise peer support. It has been determined that peer relational support has been found to accelerate career learning (Parker, Hall & Kram 2008) Sharing experiences through storytelling has been found to 'build trust, transfer tacit knowledge, facilitate learning and generate emotional connections' (Sole & Wilson 2002) <p>Adult Learning Theorists: Vygotsky 1934 – Social learning theory and William Wulf (1989), collaboratory – centre without walls</p>	<p>Session Details</p> <p>Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face-to-face Online resources available Guest academic <p>Expected timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Briefing – 20 mins Break and collect lunch – 10 mins Discussion – 1 hour 15 mins Summing up – 15 mins <p>Outline of Session</p> <p>1. Briefing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overview House rules' during session <p>What is a collaboratory? Why introduce this now? How does it work? How will it help me?</p> <p>2. Discussion Topic: career navigating and self-support</p> <p>3. Discussion question: How does the individual 'navigate' and 'manage' the system to progress a career?</p>	<p>Self-Learning Activities</p> <p>Pre-collaboratory</p> <p>Aim: To be self-aware of capabilities and those required for an ECAN portfolio</p> <p>Activity 1: What does an academic do"</p> <p>Activity 2: Capabilities – your thoughts</p> <p>Activity 3: What colleagues think?</p> <p>Post-collaboratory</p> <p>Aim: Scanning the environment for opportunities</p> <p>Activity: The three stages of environmental scanning</p> <p>Module 1 Recommended Reading</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post collaboratory readings can be located on page 15 Supplementary readings for the overall program are located on page 63

Post- Collaboratory 1 Activity: a Focus on Scanning

Aim: to adopt a process that systematically surveys gathers information and interprets relevant data to identify external opportunities and threats.

Activity: Scanning the environment for career opportunities involves three stages

1. Understanding the construct
2. Knowing why it is important
3. Recognising when and how to scan

1. The construct

Scanning the environment involves simply looking around you with intent (Choo 2002) . The aim here is in identifying how your immediate and surrounding environment can help with developing your personal career objectives. As a health professional you have been introduced to this concept as in your daily delivery of care to others. You scan in the best interest of the family or individual so that they can achieve quality care. In this tool however, the focus is on **your surrounds** and learning how to maximise personal and timely career opportunities (Lieff 2009).

2. Why scanning is important

According to Lieff (2009) scanning the environment helps you to discover opportunities and available resources within an organisation to make the best of your experiences and skills toward your future career objective. It can assist with short or long term objectives.

3. When and how to scan?

Scanning, in conjunction with reflection, should become continuous and routine.

Consider the following scanning questions and use them as you work through this section:

What do I want? What am I seeking to improve in my portfolio?

What are my strengths to accomplish my goal/s?

What resources do I have at this time to succeed in this goal/s?

What and who do I need to be aware of as I plan my career at this time?

What realistic opportunities for career advancement are currently available to me?

Adapted from(Waddell, Donner & Wheeler 2009)

Note: The trends and issues you identify in your scan can help you to make decisions about potential career opportunities within your organisation. The following is a guide to help your with your scan. It is never too early to consider both the international environment.

Identify the international and national discipline trends		
Society	Health Care	Your Discipline

Identify the international and national discipline needs		
Society	Health Care	Your Discipline

Note:

Below are some questions to help you with this part of the activity. The list of questions will probably grow over time however, the questions that will help you to consider the possibilities. Scanning is a tool that can easily be adopted as part of your daily routine. First however, you will need to determine a baseline for your individual career needs.

Faculty

List at least five (5) opportunities that you have identified

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

University

List and name at least four (4) immediate social and professional opportunities within the university environment that would assist in advancing your career?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Local

List and name at least four (4) immediate social and professional opportunities within the Faculty environment that would assist in advancing your career?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Global: Write a brief paragraph about the global challenges for your chosen academic nursing discipline

Module 1 Recommended Reading:

Academic promotion Vice Chancellors Directive

<http://www.gsu.uts.edu.au/policies/documents/promotion-academic.pdf>

Bexley E, James, R & Arkoudis

http://www.hru.uts.edu.au/docs/forum/bexley_james_arkoudis.pdf

[https://minerva-](https://minerva-access.unimelb.edu.au/bitstream/handle/11343/28921/264673_GoedegebuureAttractiveness.pdf?sequence=1)

[access.unimelb.edu.au/bitstream/handle/11343/28921/264673_GoedegebuureAttractiveness.pdf?sequence=1](https://minerva-access.unimelb.edu.au/bitstream/handle/11343/28921/264673_GoedegebuureAttractiveness.pdf?sequence=1)

Bosanquet, A., Mailey, A., Matthews, K.E. & Lodge, J.M. 2016, 'Redefining early career in academia: a collective narrative approach', *Higher Education Research & Development*, pp. 1-13.

Coates, H. & Goedegebuure, L. 2010, 'The real academic revolution', *Research Briefing Report*, LHMartin Institute.

http://www.lhmartininstitute.edu.au/userfiles/files/research/the_real_academic_revolution.pdf

Halcomb, E., Andrew, S., Peters, K., Salamonson, Y., Daly, J., Jackson, D. & Gray, J. 2014, 'Supporting Career Progression through Academic Mentorship (STREAM): Final Report of the Project Developing and Implementing a Leadership Capacity Building Program for Teaching and Learning in Nursing', *Office for Learning and Teaching, Sydney, NSW, Australia*.

Norton, A. 2013, *Mapping Australian higher education: 2013 version*, Grattan Institute Melbourne.

<https://grattan.edu.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/875-Mapping-Australian-Higher-Education-2016.pdf>

UTS Teaching and Development

<http://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/teaching-and-learning/developing-your-academic-career/new-staff-induction-0>

Module 2: Capabilities Needed

Aim: Expedite the academic career planning and development processes to enable appropriate goals

Pre-Collaboratory 2 Activities: Exploring Capabilities and Motivation

Aim: The following activities are designed to raise awareness of personal abilities that enable ECAN progression

Activity One: What does an academic do?

Read and listen to the University of Manchester's resources on 'An academic career'
An academic career <http://www.academiccareer.manchester.ac.uk/about/do/skills/>

Activity Two: Abilities – your thoughts

Abilities I bring to the Faculty	What in the Faculty can I presently achieve with these abilities?
Abilities I bring to the University	What in the University community can I presently achieve with these abilities?
Abilities I bring to transdisciplinary academia	What can I achieve with these abilities given the university and its future transdisciplinary approach?

Activity Three: Ask a colleague?

<p>Note: Review your abilities on the previous page then ask a trusted colleague the following question...What abilities do I bring to my role as an early career academic?</p> <p>Write three descriptors that colleagues have used to praise you in your role as an early career academic?</p> <p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>
<p>What attributes/traits do you have that helped you to achieve this praise? (a short paragraph or dot point list)</p>

Collaboratory 2: The 'Crafting' of An Academic		
<p>Aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss the role of the early career academic and its expectations in a positive safe environment <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review what a successful early career academic experience may look & feel like? Thoroughly examine the skills and abilities required to perform the ECAN role, progress in your career <p>Andragogical Approach for this Session Adult learners have the ability to listen to other peoples' experiences with thought and gain insight into the experience. For the experience to become 'learnt' we must 'make our own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgements, and feelings of others. Facilitating such understandings is the cardinal goal of adult education. Transformative learning develops autonomous thinking' (Mezirow 1997) to listen to other people's experiences to initiate transformative learning.</p> <p>Adult Learning Theorist: Knowles self-directed, 1974</p>	<p>Session Details</p> <p>Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face-to-face Online resources available Guest facilitator <p>Expected timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction & matters – 10 mins Break to collect lunch 20 mins Discussion & summation – 1 hr 20 mins What next? – 10 mins <p>Order of Session</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Network – over lunch 2. Discussion Topic – Academic progress and practical 'tips' on strategies 3. Discussion Question – Which strategies would be recommended for academic progression? 	<p>Self-Learning Activities</p> <p>Pre-collaboratory Aim: Activities have been selected to 'trigger' thinking about career expectations, needs and competencies Activity 1: What counts as progress? Activity 2: What motivates you to do your best work? Activity 3: Exploring what motivates us</p> <p>Post-collaboratory Aim: Use the activities to reflect on what is needed and expected in your role Activity 1: Exploring expectations Activity 2: Similarities and differences Activity 3: Fostering the differences that matter</p> <p>Module 2 Recommended learning resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Module 2 readings can be located on page 23 Supplementary readings for the overall program are located on page 63

Post-Collaboratory 2 Activities: Documenting Needs

Performance outcomes are important to personal growth, development and university business. Each fulltime UTS staff member must meet with a supervisor to 'sign off' a yearly 'Performance and Development Plan'. The plan is focused on their growth and development, with the objectives aligned with the University of Technology Sydney's strategic plan. Registered Nurses also under Australian Law must keep yearly records of continuing professional performance (CPD) in order to register each year (<http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-and-Endorsement/Audit.aspx>). Random audits are made of compliance to these CPDs. The activities below offer you a framework to assist you to begin to document *recognised* needs; *prioritise* those needs with a view to *monitoring, evaluating* and *updating* your profile in readiness for professional needs.

Aim: Use the activities to reflect on what is needed and expected in your role

Activity One: Exploring expectations

List five (5) university held 'expectations' required in fulfilment of your current portfolio? Then list in the right hand box what your current 'expectations' are toward your current portfolio?

University 'expectations' for your portfolio	Your 'expectations' for your portfolio
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
5.	5.

Activity Two: Similarities and differences

Now compare the above 'expectations'. Are there similarities? Are there differences? Are there differences that matter for you at this time? Briefly note below.

Similarities
Differences
Differences that matter now to my career

Activity Three: Fostering the differences that matter

List three areas that you need to foster given their necessity for academic career progression. Sketch some strategy/ies and how the strategy/ies will be evaluated.

Areas I need to foster	Strategy/ies	Approach to evaluation
1.		

2.		
3.		

Module 2 Recommended Readings

Findlow, S. 2011, 'Higher education change and professional-academic identity in newly 'academic' disciplines: the case of nurse education', *Higher Education*, vol. 63, no. 1, pp. 117-33.

Lent, R.W. 2013, 'Career-life preparedness: Revisiting career planning and adjustment in the new workplace', *The Career Development Quarterly*, vol. 61, no. 1, pp. 2-14.

Tourangeau, A.E., Wong, M., Saari, M. & Patterson, E. 2015, 'Generation-specific incentives and disincentives for nurse faculty to remain employed', *Journal of advanced nursing*, vol. 71, no. 5, pp. 1019-31.

Wylie, A., DiGiacomo, M., Phillips, J., Davidson, P. & Jackson, D. 2016, 'Acknowledging attributes that enable the career academic nurse to thrive in the tertiary education sector: a qualitative systematic review', *Nurse Education*.

Abele, A.E. & Wiese, B.S. 2008, 'The nomological network of self-management strategies and career success', *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 81, no. 4, pp. 733-49.

De Vos, A., Dewettinck, K. & Buyens, D. 2009, 'The professional career on the right track: A study on the interaction between career self-management and organizational career management in explaining employee outcomes', *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 55-80.

<https://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/teaching-and-learning/developing-your-academic-career/preparing-promotion>

Module 3: Fostering Relationships

Aim: Enhance healthy and effective mutual working relationship
with Faculty colleagues

Pre-Collaboratory 3: Connecting with Colleagues

Aim: to maximise colleague supports to enable adaptation and progress

Questions to reflect on as you work through this section:

- What does my ideal working week as an early career academic look like?
- Does this match with what I would like the week to be?
- What connections can assist me in developing my intended career?
- Are there other connections that I should I build?
- What supports are in place to assist me to maximise my connections?

Activity One: Assessing your networking skills

Think about the last six months and circle Y (yes) or N (no)

N	Y	1. I see all informal conversations at academic and related social events as opportunities to build my relationships and expand an network
N	Y	2. I know 50 colleagues and they know who I am and what my capabilities are.
N	Y	3. Colleagues in my network have referred me to at least 10 others who have given me some kind of career or personal information
N	Y	4. I am comfortable to contact friend of colleagues to seek information
N	Y	5. I belong to at least four professional or community organisations and am visibly active
N	Y	6. I regularly read journal articles to keep up with colleagues work
N	Y	7. I keep in touch with colleagues through social and professional media at least every three months
N	Y	8. I attend at least one conference or equivalent in six months to keep up with my field or a new field if I need to expand my network
N	Y	9. I stay in touch with colleagues that I have previously worked with
N	Y	10. I make a point of meeting with people from another field at social or professional events
N	Y	11. At social or professional events I introduce people to one another
N	Y	12. At events I remember the names of the people that I am introduced to
N	Y	13. When I am introduced I avoid long confusing job titles and labels and simply tell what I do
N	Y	14. I let people know the kinds of problems I can solve so that they know my capabilities and can refer the correct work challenges or career information to me
N	Y	15. When I talk to colleagues I usually find up-to-date information on something of professional or personal interest to me
N	Y	16. I talk frequently to other colleagues for support, ideas and resources
N	Y	17. I systematically network at work
N	Y	18. I have business cards and enjoy looking for ways to give or receive information or services so that exchanging cards is valuable and necessary
N	Y	19. I always find an appropriate way of saying 'Thank you' when someone helps i.e. a referral to a network or someone they know
N	Y	20. I look for ways that my resources and information that can help others fulfil their personal goals

See p.26 for feedback

Count how many times you circled Y and analyse your score.

1-10 Your work life and personal life will benefit as you learn the basics of networking

11- 14 You can give and get even more in your professional and personal networks as you develop your network skills

15-17 You have only a few gaps in your network. Look at the questions you answered with Ns and strengthen those areas

18-20 Well done. You are well on the way to experiencing the craft of networking

(Sullivan 2013)

Activity Two: Networking contributions

List four contributions would I bring to a network?

1.

2.

3.

4.

List four commitments that I could give to my network

1.

2.

3.

4.

Activity Three: Current reality check on your career relationships

List four characteristics of a successful network

1.

2.

3.

4.

Networks are important to a career. Suppose you wanted to build your own network, briefly state how would you go about this?

Activity Four: Mentorship and career progression
 Given the categories listed (Table 2) briefly state what you would expect from your academic supervisor and your mentor or coach (if you have one).

Supervisor	Categories	Mentor
	Our relationship would be?	
	What aspect of my career progression would they focus on?	

	Extent of their career responsibility to me is?	
	Their feedback would more likely give assistance with?	

Activity Five: Academics and the relationship with the work environment

Lee, A., Di Domenico, M. & Saunders, M.N. 2013, 'Location Independent Working in Academia: Enabling Employees or Supporting Managerial Control?', *Journal of Workplace Rights* Vol, vol. 17, no. 3-4, pp. 425-2.

Collaboratory 3: A Working Relationship		
<p>Aim</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To address the importance of the differing relationships and their necessary impact for successful career development and progression <p>Learning Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critically investigate the notion of mentorship what it is and why have a mentor Explore the attributes of what it means to be an 'intelligent mentee' <p>Andragogical approaches in this session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People learn through doing Learning can be achieved as a part of a larger community who have a common goal Games can give instant feedback <p>Learning for adults is best achieved through multiple approaches to learning to bring about change</p> <p>Adult learning theorists:(Dewey 1904), (Bandura 1977) Reflection Schon 1983</p>	<p>Session Details</p> <p>Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face-to-face Collaborative technologies made available Guest facilitator <p>Expected timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction & matters – 10 mins Break to collect lunch 20 mins Discussion, quiz & summation – 1 hr 20 mins What next? – 10 mins <p>Order of Session</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Networking – over lunch. Discussion topic: - Mentor and mentee relationship Discussion Question; How can I have a productive relationship with my mentor Testing attributes to be an 'intelligent mentee'(Barkham 2005) – a game quiz 	<p>Self-Learning Activities</p> <p>Pre-collaboratory</p> <p>Aim: to maximise colleague supports to enable adaptation and progress</p> <p>Activity 1: Assessing your networking skills</p> <p>Activity 2: Networking contributions</p> <p>Activity 3: Activity Three: Current reality check on your career relationships</p> <p>Activity 4: Mentorship and career progression</p> <p>Activity 5: Pre-reading and resources</p> <p>Post-collaboratory</p> <p>Aim: to use examine the role of networking and feedback as support mechanisms for growth</p> <p>Activity 1: Reflective exercise</p> <p>Activity 2: About feedback</p> <p>Activity 3: TED Talk</p> <p>Module 3 Recommended resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post module resources can be located on page 32 Supplementary readings for the overall program are located on page 63

Post Collaboratory 3 Activities: Reflection as a Critical tool

Aim: to use examine the role of networking and feedback as support mechanisms for growth

Activity One: Reflective exercise

Networking

What did I learn about my skills as a networker?
Do I need to make any changes in regards to networking? manage
Do I need a mentor? Why? I have one... how does it help me?
Were there any surprises about what constitutes being an 'intelligent mentee' If so, What were they?

Activity Two: About feedback

If a colleague asked you for feedback that was important to them what would you include?
According Wiggins (2012) for feedback to be constructive it must have seven (7) components.
List your seven components in the box below and give a reason. Then compare your answers
overleaf. For the full article see the reading list

Component	Reason
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

Answer

Effective constructive feedback should be:

- Planned
- Explicit
- Behaviour centred
- Specific
- Concise
- Verified by the recipient
- Honest

Activity Three: video

Shawn Achor 'the secret to better work'

https://www.ted.com/speakers/shawn_achor

Module 4 Recommended Reading

- Halcomb, E., Jackson, D., Daly, J., Gray, J., Salamonson, Y., Andrew, S. & Peters, K. 2016, 'Insights on leadership from early career nurse academics: findings from a mixed methods study', *Journal of nursing management*, vol. 24, no. 2.
- Jackson, D., Peters, K., Andrew, S., Daly, J., Gray, J. & Halcomb, E. 2015, 'Walking alongside: a qualitative study of the experiences and perceptions of academic nurse mentors supporting early career nurse academics', *Contemporary Nurse*, vol. 51, no. 1, pp. 69-82.
- Opengart, R. & Bierema, L. 2015, 'Emotionally Intelligent Mentoring: Reconceptualizing Effective Mentoring Relationships', *Human Resource Development Review*, vol. 14, no. 3, pp. 234-58.
- Musselin, C. 2013, 'Redefinition of the relationships between academics and their university', *Higher Education*, vol. 65, no. 1, pp. 25-37.
- Mezirow, J. 1990, 'How critical reflection triggers transformative learning', *Fostering critical reflection in adulthood*, vol. 1, p. 20.
- Wiggins, G. 2012, 'Seven keys to effective feedback', *2012*, vol. 70, no. 1, pp. 11-6.

Module 4: Building Resilience

Aim: Adopt the elements required to be resilient in an academic environment

Pre-Collaboratory 4: How resilient are you?

Aim: A reflection on activities that have an impact on resilience

Activity One: Testing your resilience

	Tick either 'yes' or 'no' for the following 10 items. NOTE: Do this BEFORE you read the last column 'Reasons to be resilient'.	Yes	No
1	I connect or relate well to others.		
2	I am not a particularly flexible person.		
3	I make realistic plans and take action to carry them out.		
4	I am able to communicate well with others and problem-solve better in a group.		
5	I am happy go lucky at work and home no matter what occurs.		
6	I am confident in a group only		
7	I am able to find purpose and meaning most of the time		
8	I am pessimistic rather than optimistic		
9	I appreciate humour more when I am nit at work		
10	I eat a healthy diet but my exercise is poor		

Check your reactions above to the list below

	Reasons to be resilient Being resilient relies on the following: various sources of help, including rational thinking skills, physical and mental health, and your relationships with those around you.
1	Relationships can provide support and caring (both within family and outside). Both primary factors in being resilient
2	Flexibility is one of the of the primary factors in emotional adjustment and maturity
3	Being proactive rather than reactive, assertive rather than aggressive or passive are all components of sound planning skills
4	Being an effective communicator assists with discussing and negotiating with others for what you and the team need
5	Being able to manage strong feelings. enables clear thinking and more effective action which enable better outcomes
6	Personal self-confidence is critical for managing fear and anxiety
7	Purpose and meaning is an essential framework for values clarification and meaningful actions
8	Optimists in general are better able to see the bigger picture than pessimists and are more likely to avoid the blame game, which uses up needed energy
9	Humour can be supportive and healing
10	Good health allows you to weather the down times

Adapted from:(Boden, Epstein & Kenway 2007)

Activity Two: Boosting your resilience at work

According to the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention, a quarter of all employees view their jobs as the number one stressor in their lives (Winfrey, VA-BC & CDONA 2016). The World Health Organization also describes stress as the 'global health epidemic of the 21st century' <http://www.who.int/whr/previous/en/>. Many of us now work in constantly connected, always-on, highly demanding work cultures where stress and the risk of burnout are widespread. Since the pace and intensity of contemporary work culture are not likely to change, it's more important than ever to build resilience skills to effectively navigate our work life (McDonald et al. 2013; McDonald et al. 2012).

Reflect on stress at work and list 5 approaches that you have found useful to address the stress

Five approaches to stress	
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Now compare your list to those on the next page.

	Being resilient
1.	Exercise mindfulness
2.	Developing mental agility
3.	Take detachment breaks
4.	Compartmentalise your cognitive load
5.	Cultivate compassion

(Maddi & Khoshaba 2005)

Activity Three: Reading and resources

McDermid, F., Peters, K., Daly, J. & Jackson, D. 2016, 'Developing resilience: Stories from novice nurse academics', *Nurse education today*, vol. 38, pp. 29-35.

McDonald, G., Jackson, D., Wilkes, L. & Vickers, M. 2013, 'Personal resilience in nurses and midwives: effects of a work-based educational intervention', *Contemporary nurse*, vol. 45, no. 1, pp. 134-43.

https://www.ted.com/talks/kelly_mcgonigal_how_to_make_stress_your_friend#t-224843

Collaboratory 4: Resilience in practice		
<p>Aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the need for self-management as an important tool for academic as it is not only an important tool for time management and problem solving but refers to a personal ability to resist stress and take responsibility for positive actions toward difficult situations <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Experience stories of resilience and Share strategies for resilience <p>Andragogical approach to learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-management has been for some time closely associated with effective adult learning. Learning results more effectively when make our own interpretations rather than act on the purposes, beliefs, judgements, and feelings of others. Self-regulation can lead to becoming a life-long learner Life-long learners develop the skills to be curious, confident, independent, persistent, flexible and a team player <p>Adult learning theorists – Zimmerman self-regulation 1998</p>	<p>Session Details</p> <p>Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face-to-face Collaborative technologies made available Guest Collaborator <p>Expected timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction & matters – 10 mins Break to collect lunch 20 mins Discussion & summation – 1 hr 20 mins What next? – 10 mins <p>Outline of Session</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Network - over lunch Discussion Topic: resilience Discussion Question: What is resilience and how can it be achieved in a current academic environment? 	<p>Self-Learning Activities</p> <p>Pre-collaboratory Aim: The activities are designed to reflect on activities that have an impact on resilience Activity 1: Testing your resilience Activity 2: Boosting your resilience at work Activity 3: Reading</p> <p>Post-collaboratory Aim: to explore health and wellbeing and make plans for time management in your calendar Activity 1: Are you headed for an energy crisis? Activity 2: Current reality check on time management Activity 3: videos</p> <p>Module 4 Recommended Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Module 4 readings can be located on page 41 Supplementary readings for the overall program are located on page 63

Post-Collaboratory Activities: a Health Focus

Aim: to explore health and wellbeing and make plans for time management in your calendar

Activity One: Are you headed for an energy crisis?
Please tick the statements below that are true for you

Body	Yes	No	Mind	Yes	No
I don't regularly get at least seven to eight hours of sleep, and I often wake up feeling tired			I have difficulty focusing on one thing at a time, and I easily get distracted during the day, especially by e-mail		
I frequently skip breakfast or I settle for something which isn't nutritious			I spend much of my day reacting to immediate crises and demands rather than focusing on activities with longer-term value and high leverage		
I don't get enough exercise (meaning cardiovascular training at least three times a week and strength training at least once a week)			I don't take enough time for reflection, strategizing and creative thinking		
I don't take regular breaks during the day to truly renew and recharge, or often eat lunch at my desk, if I eat at all			I work in the evenings or on week-ends and almost never take an email free leave		

Emotions	Yes	No	Spirit	Yes	No
I frequently find myself feeling irritable, impatient, or anxious at work especially when work is demanding			I don't spend enough time at work doing what I do best and enjoy most		
I don't have enough time with my family and loved ones and when I am with them I am not really with them			There are significant gaps between what I say is most important to me in my life and how I actually allocate my time and energy		
I have too little time for the activities that I most deeply enjoy			My decisions at work are more often influenced by external demands than by a strong clear sense of my own purpose		
I don't stop frequently enough to express my appreciation to others or to savour my accomplishments and things that I should be happy for			I don't invest enough time and energy in making a positive difference to others or to the world		

How is your overall energy?

Total number of statements checked _____

Guide to scores

- 0-3 excellent energy management skills
- 4-6 Reasonable energy management skills
- 7-10 significant energy management deficits
- 11-16 A full-fledged energy management crises

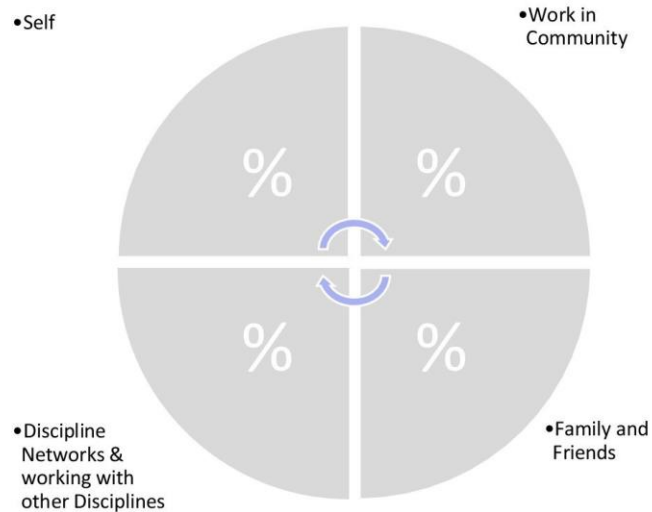
What do you need to work on?

Body _____ Mind _____
 Emotions _____ Spirit _____

Activity Two: Current reality check on time management

In the planning of a career all academics need to make judgements about approximating how much time is spent on fulfilling the plan and other commitments. This is an ongoing balancing throughout your career (Campbell & O'Meara 2014)

Mark the percentage of time you spend weekly in each section of the circles.



Now ask yourself the following questions:

- At this time, what is the most important to me in my career experience?
- Where must my priorities lie given my career at this time?
- How much time do I devote to my career at this time?

Module 4 Recommended resources

Bell, A.S., Rajendran, D. & Theiler, S. 2012, 'Job stress, wellbeing, work-life balance and work-life conflict among Australian academics', *Sensoria: A Journal of Mind, Brain & Culture*, vol. 8, no. 1, pp. 25-37.

[Bexley E : Melbourne CSHE](#)

Building: *Elisabeth* Murdoch Building; Road: Spencer Road; Campus: Parkville.

Emmaline coordinates ... 313-329. Bare, E. and Bexley, E. (2017). *Redesigning the Higher Education Workforce: A new architecture*. In Visions for ... Melbourne: MCSHE. pp. 133-142. Bexley, E. (2016). Further and Higher? Institutional Diversity .

Cleary, M., Walter, G., Halcomb, E. & Lopez, V. 2016, 'An examination of envy and jealousy in nursing academia', *Nurse Researcher*, vol. 23, no. 6, pp. 14-9.

Mixer, S.J., McFarland, M.R., Andrews, M.M. & Strang, C.W. 2013, 'Exploring faculty health and wellbeing: creating a caring scholarly community', *Nurse Educ Today*, vol. 33, no. 12, pp. 1471-6.

Module 5: Maximising Influence

Aim: Adopt the elements required to be resilient in an academic environment

Pre-collaboratory 5: Self-regulation

Aim: embrace self-awareness as an important tool for understanding self and others leading to professional growth and leadership

Activity One: Skills that result in development
List four skills that you have used in the last academic session that made 'things' happen for your career and briefly explain why you believe that they helped.

Skill	Explanation
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

Collaboratory 5: Plans for sustainability		
<p>Aim:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> embrace self-awareness as an important tool for understanding self and others leading to professional growth and leadership <p>Learning Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop a heightened sense of self-awareness and recognition of the abilities that need nurturing in pursuing a successful career in academia <p>Andragogical approach to learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> People who are self-aware have an accurate picture of their strengths and areas for improvement and the impact that they have on others Someone with a high degree of self-awareness seeks feedback and values reflection and learning (Centre for creative leadership) We require feedback when learning new skills and tasks. If it is to be effective it needs to be 'frequent, constructive and instructive'(Dinham 2008) <p>Effective self-awareness is a key attribute of life-long learning and leadership</p> <p>Adult learning theorists: self-aware Locke and Latham 2002, self-direction goals</p>	<p>Session Details</p> <p>Delivery</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face-to-face Collaborative technologies made available Guest Collaborator <p>Expected Timing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction & matters – 10 mins Break to collect lunch 20 mins Discussion & summation – 1 hr 20 mins What next? – 10 mins <p>Outline of Session</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Network - over lunch Discussion Shared learning topic: Thoughts on whether careers and leaders are planned or are they serendipitous Discussion Question: How to support nurse academics? Module evaluation 	<p>Self-Learning Activities</p> <p>Pre-collaboratory</p> <p>Aim: self-regulation</p> <p>Activity 1: Skills that result in development</p> <p>Activity 2: Reading/Resources</p> <p>Post-collaboratory</p> <p>Aim: to up-date and personalising my career progressing documents</p> <p>Activity 1: Short term Goal setting</p> <p>Activity 2: Plan for a 12 month goal.</p> <p>Activity 3: What artefacts would be appropriate for evidence of outcomes</p> <p>Activity 4: Supports required</p> <p>Activity 5: How will the evidence be shared?</p> <p>Module 5 Recommended learning resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Post module readings can be located on page 49 Supplementary readings for the overall program are located on page 63

Post- Collaboratory 5 Activities: Making Plans

Aim: to up-date and personalising my career progressing documents

An important aspect of career progression is recognising growth. To make this happen you need to be aware of your particular needs and set goals accordingly.

I think in careers, you need two things; (you need) a long-term dream and a short-term plan. And a short-term plan, I don't know if it's a year or two years but it's between 12 and 24 months – not longer. The stuff in between is a big waste of time at best, and completely anxiety producing and counter productive at worst. (Ladik 2012)

Activity One: Short term Goal setting

One way of addressing short term goals is to use a SMART approach.

1. S = specific
2. M = measureable
3. A = attainable
4. R = realistic
5. T = timely

Brainstorm a list of short-term and longer-term goals for the future (dreaming). Try to encompass all areas of your role

Short	Dreaming

Activity Two: Now select a realistic goal which you would really like to achieve over the next 12 months. Why this goal? How will it be evaluated and where will it be documented?

Goal:
Reason:

Activity Three: What artefacts (evidence) would be appropriate?

Artefacts are items of evidence 'evidence' to demonstrate accomplishments or achievements of a personal nature.

Questions to consider:

- Why is this evidence relevant to my progress?
- Which artefacts are/would be the best to demonstrate my skills, give evidence of my achievements and share with professional bodies?

Collect

All the artefacts that you collect should have a purpose demonstrating a skill or competency, or learning acquired from education, training, or work experience. You should collect a wide range of artefacts so you have many options from which to choose. When collecting artefacts, include a concise explanation about why you chose that particular piece of work, including your reflection of that piece.

Examples of artefacts or evidence of work

- Papers and writing samples of various types-descriptive, persuasive, etc.
- Professional goals statement
- Community or work experience
- Video and audio clips
- Spreadsheet and database projects
- Group projects
- Research projects and research-related writing
- Photographs, images, artwork
- Public speaking examples
- Leadership experience, qualities, and examples
- Academic awards and honors
- Examples of problem solving
- Memberships in professional organizations
- Journal/blog entries
- Examples of technology-related or new skills

Select

Selecting appropriate items that illustrate competencies and skills will clearly demonstrate abilities and achievements to your audience. Consider the following questions when selecting artefacts:

- Why did you select this particular artefact?
- What did you learn from this artefact?
- How does the artefact reflect your strengths, interests, or career pathway?
- Would you have done anything differently?

Critical Reflection

Involves being critical of my evidence/artefacts. Read the following notes (Andre & Heartfield 2011).

Reflection is a natural human thinking process for looking back over actions, experiences or situations in our lives in order to improve or learn from what occurred. Reflection is paramount in building an authentic portfolio. Questions like: What happened? How did I feel? What do I do next?

There are many models used in reflection and some can be found in the references at the end of section 5. For the purposes of building an authentic career portfolio I have used a three-phase approach advocated by (Brechin et al. 2000). The three phases consists of:

1. Critical analysis
2. Critical reflexivity
3. Critical action

Using the three-phase approach forces you to ask more than the obvious basic questions. The process allows you to examine the context, the action and who/what was involved.

1. Critical analysis

Critical analysis will help you to decide which artefacts to keep and which to discard. When commencing your own portfolio as an early career researcher you will not be aware of which evidence will be crucial. Examining theories, policies or research gives authenticity to your artefact and then adding dialogue or commentary to the artefact adds depth. The commentary includes questions such as: Why you included the artefact? Why it is important? Its relevance to your career progression? And, what has been learnt?

2. Critical reflexivity

This is about self-monitoring and giving standards to the artefact. Boud et al. calls this a 'more personalised reflection' (Boud, Cressy & Docherty 2006) where you examine your progress.

3. Critical action

The third stage is crucial as it involves making sound decisions about what the next move may be or the need for further evidence or assistance.

Ongoing evaluation and monitoring of evidence are essential because they provide evidence of outcomes. Using the organising framework supplied can assist you in monitoring and evaluating your evidence as you progress.

Activity Four: Supports

Who or what do you need support from to achieve your goal?

Activity Five: Sharing

How will you share these strengths, development ideas and career goals with others?

Module 5 Recommended Resources:

- Happell, B. & Cleary, M. 2014, 'Research career development: The importance of establishing a solid track record in nursing academia', *Collegian*, vol. 21, no. 3, pp. 233-8.
- Campbell, C.M. 2012, *Faculty agency: Departmental contexts that matter in faculty careers*, University of Maryland, College Park.
- Collin, R. 2011, 'Selling the self: career portfolios and the new common-sense of immaterial capitalism', *Social Semiotics*, vol. 21, no. 5, pp. 615-32.
- Halcomb, E., Jackson, D., Daly, J., Gray, J., Salamonson, Y., Andrew, S. & Peters, K. 2015, 'Insights on leadership from early career nurse academics: findings from a mixed methods study', *Journal of nursing management*. Patti Dobrowloski – 'draw your future take control of your life'
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4vl6wCiUZyc>

SECTION 2: Portfolio Building

Useful Tips:

- Using: SMART Goals throughout (Specific, Manageable, Attainable, Relevant and Timely),
- Update the portfolio at least every six months using the ring binder or electronic portfolio,
- The portfolio artefacts are current for two years and then become records. There is a place for records in the Appendices for items that you want to store for longer than two years.

Module 1 Populating the ECAN Portfolio

Part A

Populating with Portfolio Enablers

Artefacts inserted inside include:

- ✚ New skills
- ✚ Opportunities
- ✚ Roles
- ✚ Capabilities
- ✚ Interests
- ✚ Feedback

Part B

Populating with Portfolio Supports

Artefacts inserted here include:

- ✚ Scholarships & Records
- ✚ Committee membership: past and current
- ✚ Relationships: work contacts

Part C

Populating with Portfolio Essentials

Artefacts inserted here include:

- ✚ Teaching
- ✚ Research
- ✚ Supervision of students
- ✚ Network: disciplines
- ✚ Presentations
- ✚ Awards
- ✚ University other work
- ✚ Interview skills: progress and media

Module 2
Portfolio Refining

Leadership Portfolio

Having spent time building your portfolio the question then becomes how do you maximise your efforts and more importantly have the portfolio as a working personalised document of growth and development.

Some key questions to assist the process of personalising your portfolio are:

- What motivates you in your role as an early career academic?
- What special approaches and qualities do you bring to your work as a nursing leader?
- What would you say about what determines you as a leader' in one sentence to a colleague?

What you would say to a colleague ...

Evidence of Leadership

Aim: To use a framework of *Collect, Select, Reflect* and *Connect* to focus on evidence of leadership.

'Collect Select ReflectConnect'

Some key questions to assist the process of refining the content in your portfolio and keeping it up-to-date:

- What am I trying to achieve as an early career academic and: Why?
- What are my goals supposed to accomplish?
- How am I doing in my career progression with evidence of leadership?
- How do I know that I am progressing in my leadership role?
- How am I using the evidence to improve or celebrate my success as a leader?
- Do my goals make a difference to my career: How?
- What plans do I have already in place?
- What parts do I need to update, refine or change to maximise evidence of my leadership?
- What meaningful connections have a made in my leadership role that will illustrate understanding and competency to my audience?

Review the evidence collected in your folder under the ECAN portfolio 'enablers', 'supports' and 'essentials' and transfer to your leadership portfolio. Give reasons why the artefacts illustrate your leadership.

Part A: Enablers of Leadership

Artefact	Why is this artefact an enabler of leadership?

Part B: Supports for Leadership

Artefact	Why will this artefact support your demonstration of leadership?

Part C: Essentials for Leadership

Essential	Why is this artefact essential in demonstrating leadership?

SECTION 3
Portfolio Sharing

Professional Profiles

How will you share this evidence with others?

When it comes to packaging and marketing your background, you have three main choices: a bio (biosketch); a resume, or a CV (curriculum vitae). There are some significant differences. You will need to determine the recipient's preference – do they want something short, something more detailed or a promotional document.

Do you have an active bio-sketch, resume, Curriculum Vitae, Performance Development work plan or items that APHRA would except as Professional Development? And are they ready to go should you be asked for one for a new position, for an interested colleague or for a presentation, publication, grant application, academic supervisor or AHPRA should you be audited?

Bio-sketch – a promotional summary in an essay format of your most important highlights used for consulting, presenting or job searching.

It is an overview of you without specific dates or detailed duties. Written in the third person, it is a compelling story of your most compelling achievements. Keep it more informal and interesting. Stick to no more than one page with a few paragraphs. A bio- sketch can include photos, credentials, awards, personal information, name dropping of companies and impressive job titles. It is a piece of advertising especially for consulting and presentations. The following bio I use for speaking engagements is a sample format:

Resume – a one or two page bulleted list of your professional information used to apply for a job. It can either be in a chronological, functional, combination or business card format. A resume contains the factual and specific details of your education, experience, job titles, certifications and skills. The resume is the first impression an employer has of you and it is used to screen candidates for interviews. It is not your life history. It's a wise idea to make sure the resume is tailored to the position you are applying for. When you apply for the majority of jobs in the private, public and non-profit sectors, a one page resume works best. A two page resume is acceptable for some fields and also for jobs that require more extensive experience (McDermid et al. 2016).

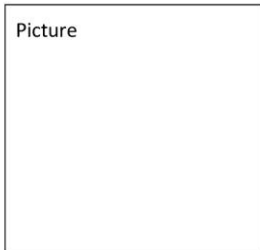
Curriculum Vitae – a more detailed resume

It gives a complete and lengthy account of your professional background. It is Latin for 'course of one's life' (Dictionary 1999). Like the resume, the goal of the CV is to get an interview. Styles and opinions vary so make sure you are tailoring your CV to the institution's needs. For example, are they looking for someone who has extensive research experience or perhaps a person who has a strong teaching and administrative background? Due to the extended length of the CV, it is going to have more categories than a resume. It is written with the most recent events first in order to be reader friendly.

1. Bio-sketch

Example

Dr Melinda Ferguson
Lecturer
Faculty of Health
University of Hogwarts



Bio-sketch

Melinda is a Registered Nurse and a lecturer in the Faculty of Health, with Bachelors and Masters degrees from The University of Technoloy Sydney. She has been employed as a fulltime academic for the last five years and is passionate about the learning for undergraduate and postgraduate nurses. Her research interest have been in the general area of stroke management and in particular , early rehabilaion and self-manaement. Currently she is enrolled in a PhD involving

This work has led to an interestt in the education of clinical practitioners to improve the quality of care in the community for stroke patients returning to home following rehabilitation. Her research has been published in leading international journals. She is a member of the

Her previous appointments include

Where she taught both undergraduate and postgraduate nurses.and she is committed to continuing her career in academia.and she contiunes to

2. Resume

Include and keep up-to-date resume regularly

3. Curriculum Vitae

Note:

Nursing Curriculum Vitae template – Registration Board

Template <http://www.ahpra.gov.au/Registration/Registration-Process/Standard-Format-for-Curriculum-Vitae.aspx>

Andre, K. & Heartfield, M. 2011, *Professional portfolios: evidence of competency for nurses and midwives*, Elsevier Health Sciences.

4. Discipline and University Professional Progress

Nursing: Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency
Continuous Professional Development

The registration standard for Nurses is set out by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia (NMBA) and although not an offence the NMBA can impose conditions if nurses do not meet the standards set. Nurses must meet a minimum of 20 hours of continuous practice development (CPD)

<http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Registration-Standards/Continuing-professional-development.aspx>

Continuos Practice Guidelines link - <http://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Codes-Guidelines-Statements/Codes-Guidelines/Guidelines-cpd.aspx>

UTS Performance and Development Plan

Key Performance Indicators:

- Teaching & Educational Development
- Research/Scholarship
- Engagement/partnership & academic management
- UTS Community

UTS performance and Development

http://www.hru.uts.edu.au/docs/manual/6_5.pdf

References and Supplementary Reading

Academic promotion Vice Chancellors Directive

<http://www.gsu.uts.edu.au/policies/documents/promotion-academic.pdf>

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