

**The Impact of Organisational Restructuring on the Working  
Lives and Identities of Faculty-based Administrative Staff:  
A Study of Australian Universities**

**Stella Ng**

**Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences  
University of Technology, Sydney**

**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education**

**September 2013**

## **Declaration**

I certify that the work in this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

---

Stella Ng

## **Work published in the course of this thesis**

### **Conference Proceedings**

Ng, S. 2007, 'University Staff: Learn to Dance Again: A Literature Review', in C. O'Connor (ed.), The 7th Annual Pacific Employment Relations Association Conference 'Regional, National, Global: Emerging Trends in Employment Relations', Queensland, 14-16 November 2007.

### **Refereed Journal Article**

Ng, S. & Spooner, K. 2007, 'From IR to HRM: Thank God for AACSB', NZJER Vol.32, No.2, pp.69-86.

### **Conference Presentation**

Ng, S. & Spooner, K. 2007, 'Actioning the Faculty's Strategic Goal: Developing Work Ready Graduates Through the study of HRM', The 7th Annual Pacific Employment Relations Association Conference, 'Regional, National, Global: Emerging Trends in Employment Relations', South Australia, 14-16 November 2007.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the people who were influential in my completion of this thesis. First, the late Professor Alison Lee, for her direct and challenging questions in helping me conceptualise the research. Next, my supervisor, Dr Tony Holland, for his patience, support, encouragement and valuable assistance in completing this thesis. I also like to acknowledge the work of Dr Guenter A. Plum who provided professional editorial service in my thesis preparation. Finally, to my team in the previous School of Management in the Business School, University of Technology, Sydney: I owe the biggest thank you to all of you; without your cooperation at work I would not have been able to complete this study.

## Table of Contents

<b>Declaration.....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Work published in the course of this thesis .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
Conference Proceedings .....	iii
Refereed Journal Article.....	iii
Conference Presentation.....	iii
<b>Acknowledgements.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>List of Abbreviations .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Abstract x</b>	
<b>Prologue – My Story .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Purpose of the Study.....	5
Conceptual Framework .....	8
Research Questions .....	10
Methodology 12	
Significance of the Research .....	13
Ethical Dimensions.....	15
Expected Findings and General Limitations .....	15
<b>Chapter 2 Identification of Historical Influences – A Literature Review.....</b>	<b>18</b>
Introduction 18	
The Changing Higher Education.....	20
Economic rationalism and the Australian higher education sector .....	22
Expansion.....	23
Commercialisation .....	24
Entwinement of the role of the university .....	29
Complexity of the roles of university staff.....	30
Academic and administrative tension .....	32
Academic workload .....	34
Ageing Australian workforce .....	37
Theoretical Framework .....	39
Administrative staff in universities as professional practitioners.....	40
Administrative staff during organisational restructure.....	42
Value (or lack of value) as administrative staff .....	43
Meaning (a relevant title) as administrative staff.....	44
Identity of mid-level faculty-based administrative staff under restructure .....	47
Conceptualisation of self-identity under restructure: identity and individual experience..	49
Identity formation under restructure: organisational culture.....	52
Self-identity under restructure: organisational performance.....	54
Self-identity under restructure: the individual experience .....	57
Chapter Summary.....	62
<b>Chapter 3 Methodology .....</b>	<b>65</b>
Introduction 65	
Research Questions and Qualitative Research Methodology.....	66
Analytical Reflectivity .....	79
Ethical Dimensions.....	79

Chapter Summary.....	81
<b>Chapter 4 Working Environment of MFAS during Organisational Restructuring</b> .....	<b>82</b>
Presentation of Findings.....	83
Background of Interviews.....	85
Background Questions.....	87
Working Life and Experience during Organisational Restructure – Summary Description 99	
Reflection as a Self-ethnographic Researcher.....	102
Identification of Individuals’ Metaphors during Restructure.....	104
Chapter Summary.....	106
<b>Chapter 5 Demands of Key Stakeholders and Support for MFAS During Restructure .....</b>	<b>108</b>
MFAS Working Lives.....	109
Role of supervisor.....	115
Identification of major sources of support during restructure.....	117
Work stress.....	119
Lack of trust.....	119
Problems with change processes.....	121
Chapter Summary.....	124
<b>Chapter 6 Construction of Identity of MFAS During Restructure.....</b>	<b>126</b>
Relevance of Today’s Administrative Work.....	127
Identity of MFAS.....	132
Us and Them	134
Others	138
Chapter Summary.....	139
<b>Chapter 7 Discussion and Conclusion.....</b>	<b>142</b>
Change	143
Reconfiguration of Workplace Hierarchies.....	145
Casualisation of Working Relationships and Work Context.....	146
Managerial Dexterity Development.....	148
Crafting management and employee relationship.....	149
Communication during restructure.....	151
Role of supervisors.....	151
Management education.....	153
Restructuring and Marginalisation of Employees.....	153
Construction of Identity and Polarisation of Individual Perception.....	156
Construction of identity.....	157
Extending current individual identity theory: the polarisation of individual perception..	158
Influence of home-self in individual identity.....	162
Influence of oneness in individual identity.....	162
Reflecting Oneself.....	164
Summary of Findings.....	166
Conclusion	168
Significance of Findings.....	173
Limitations of the Study.....	174
Limited to two institutions.....	174
Researcher bias.....	175
Self-reporting.....	175
Recommendations for Practice and Future Research.....	176

Management interaction .....	176
Engaging the workforce and communications .....	177
Retaining key intellectual assets .....	177
Extending the study to other universities .....	177
<b>Appendices .....</b>	<b>179</b>
Appendix 1: Cover Letter to Faculties .....	179
Appendix 2: Consent Form – Interviews .....	181
Appendix 3: Interview Questions (1-14).....	182
Appendix 4: Consent Form – Non-Participant Observation .....	183
Appendix 5: Better Universities Renewal Funding 2008 Summary of Institutional Projects 184	184
Appendix 6: BURF Funding Calculations and Allocations .....	208
Appendix 7: 2008 Bradley Report– 46 Recommendations (pp.xviii-xxv) .....	211
Appendix 8: Formal Qualification as part of essential criteria in Selection Criteria of MFAS including Faculty Managers in Australian Higher Education from 2011- 2012 224	224
<b>List of References .....</b>	<b>230</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 1: A Metaphor, Fast Food Meal, of the interrelations of the actors in the university environment (Ng 2007) .....	2
Figure 7.1: Composition of identity: Home-Self, Work-Self and Oneness.....	160

## List of Tables

Table 2.1: A Summary of Historical Key Changes to Australian Higher Education (Bessant 1995; Bradley 2008; Dawkins 1988; DEEWR August 2011; Fisher 1994 in Gillespie et al. 2001; Marginson 1997c, p.11, 2000; Marginson and Considine 2000; Nelson Reform 2002-2006) .....	21
Table 2.2: Operating Surpluses by University (higher education operations), 2010 (DEEWR Media Release Nov 2011) .....	28
Table 3.1: Interview schedule .....	73
Table 4.1a: Employment data as reported by participants: service in universities .....	88
Table 4.1b: Employment data as reported by participants: service in current job .....	88
Table 4.2: Current position as reported by participants .....	88
Table 4.3: Educational qualifications as reported by participants .....	89
Table 4.4: Significant organisational restructures experienced by participants .....	91
Table 4.5: Major and Minor Organisational Restructures Experienced by Participants.	92



## **List of Abbreviations**

AVCC	Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee
CAE	Colleges of Advanced Education
CGS	Commonwealth Grants Scheme
DERW	Department of Employment, Workplace and Relations
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
ERA	Excellence in Research
HE	Higher Education
HECS	Higher Education Contribution Scheme
HEWS	Higher Education Worker Scheme
HRU	Human Resources Unit
MFAS	Mid-level Faculty-based Administrative Staff
NTEU	National Tertiary Education Union
RFM	Relative Funding Model
RQF	Research Quality Framework
UK	United Kingdom
UNS	Unified National System
UNSW	University of New South Wales
US	United States
UTS	University of Technology, Sydney

## **Abstract**

As universities focus on changing their operational and functional structures to adapt to the new competitive environment, the challenge for administrative staff is to make sense of their positions as a result of restructuring. More often, administrative staff are seen as dispensable employees under the economic rationalist policies of executive management. This research focuses on the impact of organisational changes on the identities of Mid-level Faculty-based Administrative Staff (MFAS) and how they see themselves as part of the university. Firstly, it identifies the types of restructuring that affect their day-to-day work. Secondly, it examines how they resolve various demands of key stakeholders in a complex environment. Finally, it identifies the kinds of approaches at work that help them to construct meaning and how their values are constructed.

The study argues that the way MFAS construct meanings is influenced by cultural change, organisational restructure and the impact of individual perception on their individual perception of stress and pressure in their workplace. This study defends the importance of talent management in recruiting and retaining committed, skilled employees, especially during restructure. A qualitative case study approach was used to collect the data and a constructivist approach in data analysis.

The findings of this study highlight the many constraints facing MFAS, and the complex nature of being an MFAS in today's workforce. It emerged very clearly that dependence on a peer support network in helping MFAS themselves at work during restructure is key to their positive coping mechanisms; however, their direct supervisors hold the key to their well-being, trust and commitment. The findings suggest that organisational restructure has not only had an impact on the working lives of MFAS but went beyond the change process to affect individuals' health and mental state. Furthermore, working as MFAS is a profession, shown by individuals' dedication to their work and by their formal qualifications. In addition, the findings suggest that the construction of individual identity during restructure is affected by the three domains work-self, home-self and oneself. Each of the domains has its own set of values and beliefs that are socially constructed. The study suggests future research needs to incorporate the well-being of an individual in creating a desirable organisational

identity. A closer integration between theory and practice would be beneficial to all supervisors and management in term of organisational success, as would further management education for all managerial staff.

## Prologue – My Story

Mid-level Faculty-based Administrative Staff (MFAS) are the focus of this research, an examination of the impact of organisational restructure on their working lives and of the way they construct their identity during restructure. I offer this section as my personal reflections on the initial thinking about my study at the end of Spring 2000.

My reflections are informed by scholars whose work provided a foundation for my thinking (Conway 1998; Dobson 2000; Dobson & Conway 2003; McInnis 1998; Szekeres 2006) and my work as School Manager to the School of Management in the UTS Faculty of Business, and then as Administrative Manager of the Management Discipline Group (MDG) of the UTS Business School. Whilst the following narrative observations incorporate the comments of a number of academic and administrative staff members, the opinions and interpretations I offer are entirely my own.

In the last few years, I have found myself drawn into thinking about the relationship between academics and administrators. The way academics and administrators communicate, interact and work with each other has long intrigued me. I recently overheard a conversation among a group of academics:

*Who do they think they are? They are here to support me, not to tell me what to do. Without us, they wouldn't be here.*

Other academics involved in the same conversation expressed similar sentiments. The apparent conflicts between both groups have deepened my belief that a better understanding between the groups is necessary. These conflict situations often include destructive criticisms of each group by the other. In light of these observations, I often wonder about the way in which MFAS might see themselves; how they construct their own identities. Observing that more and more members of administrative staff earn formal university qualifications (Whitchurch 2004), I have questions regarding how MFAS construct their work identities, how they approach the process of self-definition, as their level of qualification approaches that of their academic colleagues.

Some years ago, I developed a simple model to describe this (Ng 2007). In my metaphor,

the academics are the hamburgers, the administrators are the French fries, and the other employees are the drinks. Clearly, the hamburger is the central focus of the meal and that attracts customers to buy. The French fries and the drinks complete the meal and so they are an integral part of the whole meal. The contribution that the administrative staff and other staff make to the whole university is a significant one and so it can be argued that the ‘side dishes’ are as important as the ‘main course’. (Ng 2007, p.2)

There are, of course, other perspectives on the relationship between academics and administrative staff.

*Universities are the hamburger, academics are the meat and administrators are the bread roll. Without both, you just don't have a hamburger at all. (Senior Academic).*

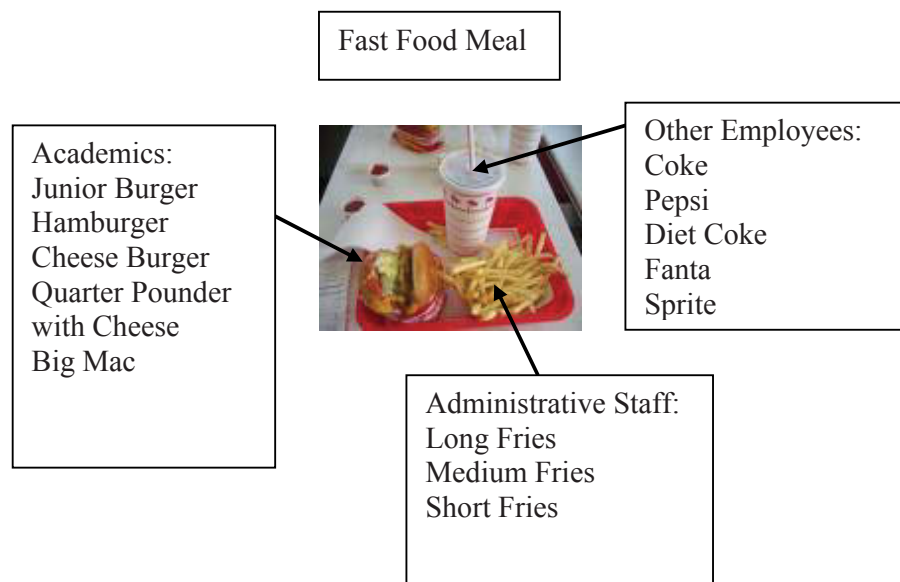


Figure 1: Metaphor ‘Fast Food Meal’ of interrelationships between actors in university environment (Ng 2007)

A collation of reports of surveys of various university staff (academic and administrative) confirms that insufficient support in terms of financial and staffing resources is a crucial factor in this high stress and high workload environment (Harman 2003; NTEU 2007; UTS Staff Survey 2007; Winefield, Gillespie, Stough, Dua,

Hapuarachchi & Boyd 2003). Perhaps the most alarming issue is the way in which universities conduct organisational restructures. 63 per cent of general staff considered restructuring processes to be poorly handled in their institutions in the 2007 National Tertiary Education Union Higher Education Survey (NTEU 2007).

Reports such as these provide an important view of the working conditions of university staff. A key problem for executive management is that of retaining the loyalty, and service, of skilled employees during restructure. It becomes critical for policy makers and academic managers to carefully manage ever increasing staff workloads to ensure that being an academic remains an attractive career option (Houston, Meyer & Paewai 2006), and to attract and retain talented non-academic staff in what are becoming increasingly competitive higher education and commercial sectors. In order to manage change effectively, universities depend upon the commitment of academic staff as much as they depend on their strategic organisational goals and administrative staff (Ng & Spooner 2007).

In a post-industrial service dominated economy, most jobs require a set of competencies, knowledge and personalities that form the basis of human capital. Human capital, combined with a strong organisation structure, is the key to the growth of an organisation (Hatch & Dyer 2004; Kamaluddin & Rahman 2009, p.3; Lawler 2000) and a valuable asset that provides a competitive advantage to organisations that are able to access, utilise and manage it successfully. Organisations need to recruit skilled workers, foster the development of new and existing skills in employees, and retain committed and talented staff. The value of an organisation in the new economy depends upon its investment in people. Organisational goals that provide employees with a sense of meaning and purpose will inspire commitment that is a powerful driver of productivity and an important factor in maintaining and developing human capital. In the current environment of a shortage of skilled labour, attracting and retaining talented staff is a challenge (Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations 2012). Investment in current staff will give business a substantial advantage and “attract better people who are motivated to do a superior job” (Bolman & Deal 2011, p.129).

These observations show that the need to develop and retain skilled staff is important to the success of an organisation, and that restructures and change programs are

destabilising events that, improperly executed, may lead to the loss of the very staff members who are critical for ongoing organisational success. It stands to reason that a strong understanding of staff experiences, motivations and perspectives will better enable an organisation to address staff needs in ways that encourage them to stay and to grow. It is to this understanding that this study aims to develop a strong understanding of support staff experiences, motivation and perspectives to retain and to help support staff grow themselves.

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

It is my ambition to say in ten sentences what others say in a whole book.

Friedrich Nietzsche

This chapter explains the central purpose of this study, presents specific research questions and addresses ethical considerations. It discusses details of expected outcomes and acknowledges the limitations of this study.

### **Purpose of the Study**

This study examines the impact of organisational restructuring on the working lives of Mid-level Faculty-based Administrative Staff (MFAS) in two Australian universities. The concerns of and demands on MFAS (Johnsrud 2002) and the construction of individual identity (Reissner 2010; Watson 2008) are becoming increasingly prominent issues in the workplace as individuals strive to make sense of their situation in modern society (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003; Watson 2008). This study presents the stories of a number of different individuals who work in the university sector. Their stories demonstrate the factors that affect – and effect – their formation of identity, and the ways in which they construct their identities during restructure. When restructuring is seen from the perspective of individual experiences, it can be viewed as a self-organisation, or a self-(re)organisation process.

Often, MFAS are viewed as a dispensable group of employees and so they are in the so-called “firing-line or in linking-pin” positions (Scott 1976 in Johnsrud and Rosser 1999). The reasons for MFAS being seen as dispensable may include the traditional view of administration staff as “the docile clerks who had instinctively acknowledged the innate authority of academics” (Scott 1995, p.64), as menial workers or as invisible staff (Szekeres 2004). Possibly also contributing to this view is a lack of requirements for specific skills or qualifications in recruitment of MFAS, particularly for roles below the Higher Education Worker Scheme (HEWS) level 10 (see Appendix 8), and a lack



of, on the part of executive management, the complexity of the roles of MFAS in terms of compliance problems, political issues and interactions with academic and other staff, other administrative units and the public (Johnsrud & Rosser 2000).

Today, many administrators have qualifications and experience that render them capable of undertaking some teaching or curriculum design (Pickersgill, Barneveld & Bearfield 1998; Whitchurch 2004). It is therefore of crucial importance that MFAS be seen as occupying a professional role, not because of their level of qualification alone, but also because of their dedication and their professionalism at work. As in other professions, people bring their dedication, rather than their qualification, to work.

A situation is arising where economic rationalism provides a rationale for a ‘quick fix’ approach for university executive management to achieve a balanced budget (Gladman 2007; Gornitzka & Larsen 2004; Ketchell 2002; Leader 2006; O’Keefe 2004; Rout 2007). The process of balancing budgets and achieving apparent efficiencies, and the perceptions of the unimportance of administrative staff (Norton 2007) – especially MFAS – persist in the minds of policy makers (Gornitzka & Larsen 2004). The number of centrally employed administrative staff dropped from 21 per cent in 1990 to 19 per cent in 2006, which can be attributed to a combination of decentralisation and outsourcing (Norton 2007). At the same time, the overall expenditure on academic salaries was 48 per cent compared to 46 per cent on administrative staff salaries since 2002 (Norton 2007). In 2010, higher education providers reported that their overall expenditure on employee benefits for non-academic employees was 25.9 per cent as compared to 29.5 per cent for academic staff (DEEWR 2011). Despite an increased demand for compliance with government policies, the overall increase in non-academic employee benefits was lower than that for academic employee benefits.

Whilst there has been much research on the impact of reform on the higher education (HE) sector, most studies have focused on the workload of and the difficulties experienced by academic staff (Churchman 2004, 2006; Forgasz & Leder 2006; Harman 2000, 2003; Marginson 1998). Despite the fact that administrative staff made up 57 per cent of university employees (DEST 2005; Norton 2007), the literature makes relatively light of them and their experience.

Rosser (2004) made a national study of American universities' executive staff, using structural equation modelling in seeking to understand the reasons for their decision to leave their jobs. Her study found a direct relationship between the perceptions of executive staff of their work life and their intentions to leave. Her result also shows a direction correlation between the level of job satisfaction and intentions to leave. Similar findings demonstrated linkages between job satisfaction and intention to leave (Gomes 2009; Johnsrud 2002; Volkwein & Zhou 2003). Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser (2000) studied the morale and motivation of MFAS taking a quantitative approach. They concluded that the relationship between worklife issues and morale highlights "the need for both longitudinal and comparative data to better understand individuals affective responsive to organisations and the influence of those responses on their behaviour" (p.55). Indeed, as Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser (2000) state,

morale is based largely upon individual perceptions, and the perceptions of consequence are those that reflect the values and norms of the organization. Midlevel administrator morale is determined by their perceptions that they are treated fairly, that they and their opinions are valued, and that their work is meaningful... and the supervision they receive is conducive to improving rather than diminishing morale. (p.1)

Szekeres (2006) used open-ended interviews to examine general staff – including executive staff – experiences in a corporate university setting. Her study confirmed that "an increase of stress, intensification of work, reduced resources and increased expectations" (p.143) was partly due to the corporatisation of universities.

The abovementioned studies also show that career paths for MFAS appear to be limited both in terms of specialised training and in terms of development opportunities when compared to those of senior administrative staff and academics. An understanding of the ways in which MFAS make sense of their work environment and construct their identities in the HE sector will contribute to improving the way universities execute change programs by providing an additional tool. Throughout the study, the term "senior management" is referred to University management whereas the "term management" is referred to local management that can be direct supervisor or unit or department or faculty.

## **Conceptual Framework**

Several guiding conceptual frameworks have helped to shape this study. First, a development of the concept of identity is required. Whetten and Godfrey begin by considering Ancient Greek philosophy, “for Plato, identity is a form that exists metaphysically and instantiates differently in each person; Aristotle’s portrait of the self provides an early hint of the view that there can be many different identities housed within an individual” (1998, p.18).

The likelihood that an individual may construct multiple identities leads to the possibility that the individual’s identities may, to some extent, be in conflict with each other. If such a situation presents then we might expect to find that a level of stress or anxiety arises as a result. We may then consider that, if an individual might construct multiple conflicting identities in different social contexts, there is also the possibility that multiple conflicting identities might present in one specific social context and that this may lead to even more stress and anxiety (Pate, Beaumont & Pryce 2009).

Organisations are composed of groups of individuals who continuously make sense of their contribution and value in constructing their identities. Identity is constructed socially (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003). Identity construction is a dynamic process in which an individual may accept, create, rethink and reconstruct his/her own identity to suit a particular social environment (Pullen & Linstead 2005). As identity is also partially embedded in structure, when an organisation undergoes a restructure so do the identities of the staff (Pratt & Foreman 2000). Often the identity of an individual within the organisation will also be changed. Postmodernists argue identity is fragmented and situational (Whetten & Godfrey 1998); however, it is still important for individuals to have a ‘stable’ identity to rationalise their social value to create meaning when faced with uncertainties:

even as an identity might be in flux, there is a need for it to appear stable in terms of people’s construction of meaning for themselves... the need for stability of meaning in our organisational lives... because of the continuous renegotiation, it is, in fact, in flux. But because of the need for stability, there is the need to make it appear to be stable. (Whetten & Godfrey 1998, p.39)

Individuals construct meaning in their working life so as to internalise and rationalise their identity. Somewhat recursively, the constructed identity in turn affects the sense they make of their environment. Thus, employees' sense of identity is strongly associated with the organisation in which they work.

Organisations will have an effect on an individual's perception of self by way of their position in a bureaucratic hierarchy and by way of the system of rules – legal and culture – that define the nature and status of that position (Bolman & Deal 2011). Pullen and Linstead (2005) characterise the role of organisational culture as a source of cues helping employees as they re-evaluate and re-invent their conceptualisation of their identity, position, value and contribution to their organisation, and as a platform that affects their internal mechanism in constructing meaning.

Blasi and Glodis (1995) propose two sets of questions, suggesting that

for future research: the first concerns the identity modes and should aim at the refinement of their description, the construction of more reliable and efficient instruments, and at the investigation of the correlational network of each mode, namely, at discovering the psychological implications of experiencing identity according to one or another mode. The second set of questions concerns the empirical relations between identity statuses and identity modes. (p.429)

This study responds to Blasi and Glodis's call by examining and extending the notion of subjective experience of identity to consider their extent in the process of identity construction in the workplace context.

This study also has at its basis a response to Gornitzka and Larsen's (2004) call for further research on the qualitative perspectives of administrative restructuring via a systematic and empirical study. In their research on restructuring the university administrative staff, Gornitzka and Larsen (2004) stated that a single focus on the issue of efficiency and cost cutting would inhibit an understanding of administrative staff's contribution and role in university life. Additionally, this study integrates the calls for further research on mid-level university administrators by Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser (2000), Rosser (2000) and Johnsrud and Rosser (1999).

## Research Questions

To connect the experience of MFAS to their contribution in HE during and after change processes, it is appropriate that this study interprets the impact of organisational restructure on the working lives of MFAS in the Australian HE sector. With these aims in mind, this study is guided by the following general research question:

*What impacts are the major organisational changes having on the working lives of MFAS and on the way that they see themselves as part of the university?*

The most important tasks of the study are to identify the types and numbers of restructures MFAS have experienced, the nature of major restructures, the experiences of MFAS during major restructures, the ways in which MFAS deal with stress during restructures, and how MFAS construct meaning. Therefore, to help in answering the above general research question, the following three research sub-questions have been formulated:

### *Research Question 1*

- a) *What types of restructuring are MFAS experiencing?*
- b) *What is the nature of the day-to-day experiences of MFAS in the current climate of change?*

This two-part question recognises that major structural changes in HE are taking place within all universities and seeks to have MFAS nominate the changes that MFAS consider to be key. MFAS will be encouraged to reflect on their past and current experiences by discussing the nature of their feelings in these changes. MFAS will also be able to identify the various sources of stress experienced at work. It is expected that there will be a common generalisation of the nature of the experiences of MFAS and the sources of stress MFAS experience in different faculties and different universities.

### *Research Question 2*

*How do MFAS resolve the demands of key stakeholders, students, academics, other administrative staff and the public, in the current changing work environment?*

This question addresses the complexity of the work of MFAS, the difficulty MFAS experience in accommodating the demands of key stakeholders, and in particular how MFAS manage to satisfy various requests within the overall framework of their work environment. The concept of reflection will be employed to help MFAS to explore their approaches in adapting changes at work. The question will also help MFAS to understand their priority in their work. This question is founded on the premise that paradigms have changed in HE as the focus of executive management has moved from education to financial and performance measures (Marginson & Considine 2000). Examples of the paradigm shifts that prompt this question are given in the next paragraph.

In the past, in both case universities (A and B), schools, centres and units had thoughtful and engaging debate in meetings designed to construct annual strategic plans that were centrally relevant to each unit and constructed with guidelines from university executive management. The starting point for construction of an annual strategic plan is to establish what actions will address the key performance indicators in order to meet the expectations of university executive management rather than considering the needs and goals of the schools, centres and units. In more recent years, university executive management has set a list of annual key performance indicators which are channelled down to faculties, with the expectation of implementation and compliance with annual measures to be taken and reported back to executive management (Marginson & Considine 2000). Under this approach, “the new central planning committee typically require deans and other budget holders to submit a process of ‘performance-against-planning’ in which faculty priorities are subsumed under a set of priorities established by the VC and his or her executive. ... In many cases we also see a more exacting system of performance evaluating of deans in which individuals are measured against their process towards meeting such central targets and objectives” (p.80). In my role as a Discipline Group Manager of Management Discipline Group who has financial management responsibility are expected to monitor the movement of monthly financial report closely. It is expected the actual expenses will closely match projected monthly expenses. Furthermore, there is also pressure to return a ‘balanced’ budget even under a significant budget cut, ‘The not negotiable budget’.

The name change from ‘Staff Annual Work Plan’ to ‘Staff Performance Review’ is an indicator of another type of performance focus. In any case, the details will be used as the basis for staff appraisal, promotion or demotion in an individual’s career development.

### *Research Question 3*

*How do MFAS perceive their professional life and construct meaning?*

This question seeks to identify the various internal and external factors that may affect the professional life of MFAS. It draws on their perceptions of their contribution and the value of their work in the operation and function of the university. MFAS are encouraged to reflect on how they see their work and how they see themselves being perceived by academic staff and students, and how they construct meaning at work, particularly under conditions of constant restructure.

## **Methodology**

The methodology for this qualitative study is that of an interpretative and descriptive case study. A broad epistemology through detailed analysis of data collected in interviews, and associated secondary data, including documents related to universities’ restructure, was adopted. The theoretical framework is introduced below and will be explained in detail in Chapter 3, ‘Methodology’.

Case studies help researchers to understand issues further (Merriam 1998). In this study, MFAS were interviewed with respect to their experience of organisational restructure, particularly in respect of their day-to-day working lives and the construction of their identity. The interview data were combined with documentary data concerning MFAS and functional, organisational and structural aspects of change. These are documents that are internal to the university, some relating to particular faculties, some relating to the entire university, and some are documents that are in the public domain relating to the HE sector at large.

A reference group was asked to provide the basis for an initial generalised scoping of the study via informal interview separately with questionnaire. This initial reference

group was composed of three academics and two administrators, based in three different universities. The academics are a lecturer, a senior lecturer, and a professor, and all three hold doctoral degrees. Both administrators hold High School Certificates. Each of the reference group members has more than 15 years of experience working in the Australian HE sector. The aim was to gather thoughts, ideas and insights from the group of academics and support staff so as to assess the feasibility of the proposed research. Interviews with each of the reference group member yielded rich data for the study. In very general terms, the group agreed that in recent years an over-emphasis on multi-sources of funding has strongly affected the managerial approach taken in and by universities.

### **Significance of the Research**

Most universities have hosted some form of restructure over the past four years (Perkins 2009; Robinson 2011), for example, University of Sydney (Tay 2011), University of Melbourne (Redman 2011), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at University of New South Wales (Robinson 2011), and ‘condensing’ 11 faculties into five at University of Wollongong (Maiolo 2012, p.4). University staff are facing the realities of the ‘living change’. Most research has concentrated on academic working lives (Dearlove 2002; McInnis 1998; Winefield et al. 2003), and very little research has considered the experience of MFAS. More often than not, the work that MFAS perform is perceived as easy and the MFAS are considered easily replaceable. Scott (1976 in Johnsrud & Rosser 1999) acknowledges that little is known about the working lives of MFAS. I argue that it is important to allow them to tell their own stories and to report their perceptions of their professional life, and this study aims to collect and report on those stories and perceptions.

The research embodies issues arising from organisational change and its effect on the traditional university structure, which in turn effects change to the activities of MFAS. It aims primarily to establish an appreciation of the complexity and the difficulties of working as MFAS in an environment that is changing for both individual staff and for policy makers. The significance of this study is that it will provide:



- 1) a deeper understanding of the impact of restructure on the way MFAS work;
- 2) a clearer picture of how MFAS perceive themselves as professionals;
- 3) a better understanding of how MFAS conceptualise their value and create meaning of their daily activities in light of the structural and functional changes; and
- 4) a more complete understanding of the extent to which MFAS have to go to satisfy key stakeholders at work.

The study aims to contribute to the body of knowledge on the working lives of MFAS, and the construction of identities by MFAS, using qualitative research methods, and focuses on improving the human resource management process of recruitment and retention. The findings of this study are expected to lead to an appropriate talent management approach to attract and retain loyal and talented employees whilst restructures take place, given that the educational sector has the largest number of workers over 45 years of age in Australia in a shrinking skilled labour market (Department of Employment and Workplace Relation 2005, 2012).

The study does not intend to linger upon any particular issues in the working lives of MFAS, but rather hopes to provide a rich source of data, from a practical perspective, that will be useful for senior management who wish to initiate future changes by assisting them to

- 1) Frame and answer challenging financial and cultural questions; and
- 2) Suggest a better process for the retention of skilled and committed employees.

Other MFAS and administrative staff also should find this study useful because its findings will provide a basis for understanding some of the effects of change on the administrative staff who work in those universities, staff members whose performance will have a direct impact on the development, and continuing functioning, of those universities. It will also seek to address the apparently common notions that ‘the power is shifting to administrative staff’ and ‘administrative staff are dispensable and unimportant’. Finally, it is hoped that this study will be equally useful for its potential to enable current and future university staff to better understand contemporary trends in ‘professional’ administrative work, its experience and ultimately its meaning.

## **Ethical Dimensions**

With my dual roles as researcher and as one of the MFAS, I am aware that there are particular ethical considerations to be observed. By conducting interviews at other universities, and at other faculties within my own university, I avoided the ethical conflict that would have arisen by attempting to interview my own colleagues. Each interview was conducted by myself, was carried out in English, and typically lasted between one and two hours. I have made considerable effort to be as transparent and open as possible that will be explained in details in Chapter 3, 'Methodology'.

## **Expected Findings and General Limitations**

The study investigates the impact of organisational restructure on the working lives of MFAS in two universities. It is acknowledged that the approach to data gathering constitutes a limitation on the general liability of conclusions drawn beyond the sampled site(s). However, by limiting itself to conducting two case studies, an in-depth understanding of the phenomena at those sites will be achieved (Merriam 1998; Yin 2003). Some of the findings may be applicable to similar situations. It is expected that both similar and yet distinctive patterns will emerge, in line with local dynamics, such as working environment, organisational charts and organisational culture. The social, educational and demographic characteristics of MFAS will have a significant influence on the findings. However, while it is important to appreciate the unique environment of each university, the study will offer some general insights into the creation of conditions that would support better change management. The findings of the study are subject to the relevance of the situation of a reader. The study seeks to provide an understanding of the construction of the self-identity of individuals going through restructuring programs in the HE sector. It seeks to help university decision makers understand the complex cultural, financial and human resource issues that must be properly managed if universities are to retain 'those who are productive is important to campuses' (Johnsrud 2002), the talents and loyalty of their administrative staff, and in doing so the study seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge in the discipline of human resource management and organisational theory in the construction of self-identity.

To achieve these aims, the thesis is composed of seven chapters, as follows:

Chapter 1 provides a concise overview of the thesis.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the scholarly literature of the key topics, and outlines the general theoretical underpinnings of the study and its research design. The review, beginning with a historical examination of the HE sector, will inquire into the effect of restructure on the working lives of MFAS and on their construction of identity. This literature review examines factors affecting the polarisation of individual perception during restructure. The chapter concludes by examining the relationship between identity formation and individual experience in the change process.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodological approach taken by the study, informed by the literature review. The chapter describes sampling, data collection and data analysis, justifies the choice of methods and discusses the limitations of the approaches taken.

Chapter 4 is concerned with the various perceptions involved in the working lives of MFAS. The chapter begins with a look at the educational background of each MFAS interviewed. Their stories provide an important insight into their lives and give the readers some idea of their everyday working lives.

Chapter 5 demonstrates the dynamics of the working relationships of MFAS and the key support that MFAS need, particularly during restructuring processes. The chapter outlines the strengths and weaknesses of different working relationships, specifically under the pressure of restructuring, providing another perspective on the working lives of MFAS. Those working relationships and relevant key support form a complex picture of the working lives of MFAS during restructure.

Chapter 6 presents the factors that motivate MFAS to work. The impact of restructuring on the individual is not an individual thing but has an effect on existing staff.

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 are focused on describing the working lives of MFAS during restructure, and thus present the results of the study. In doing so, these three chapters seek to address the research questions and to allow the reader to experience what MFAS go through a politicised work context, with only limited academic interpretation of this so far.

Chapter 7, the final chapter, discusses, explains and summarises selected findings from the study with reference to the literature and draws conclusions. The chapter examines the impact of restructuring on the level of trust and commitment of MFAS at work, their feelings about their well-being, and their crucial working relationships. The chapter highlights the relationship between an individual's internal processes and his or her coping and balancing mechanisms as they experience restructure. The chapter also considers the dependence of MFAS on a network of supportive peers and how that assists them in coping with restructures. The chapter concludes with a reflection on the ways in which these themes relate to the self-identity of MFAS and their ability to manage their working lives during restructure. A theoretical examination of the relationship between polarised individual perceptions, i.e. the traditional concept of a profession and the subjective categorisation by MFAS in the construction of self-identity. Finally, the chapter makes practical suggestions for a better change management process and for future research to extend the insights of this study.

## Chapter 2

### Identification of Historical Influences – A Literature Review

If we knew what it was we were doing, it would not be called research, would it?

Albert Einstein

#### Introduction

In the Prologue I explained my initial personal reasons for initiating this study. The previous chapter introduced the main research question and outlined the gathering interest and importance being placed on the construction of meanings of MFAS during restructure in the changing HE sector. Researchers have found that the changes brought about by the philosophy of economic rationalism have caused a change in hiring business-oriented focused employees (Eveline 2004, p.134), an increase in the issue of overlapping roles among academics and administrative staff (Whitchurch 2008, p.82), and power struggle and conflict among university staff. Much of the literature suggests that the shift to ‘managerialism’ is causing further strain on university staff, especially MFAS, in the process of organisational change (Dobson 2000; Dobson & Conway 2003; Rosser 2000; Scott 1980).

To examine the relevant literature concerning key constraints on the working lives of MFAS, this chapter is divided into two main sections. The first section briefly considers key philosophical events underpinning this research in the changing HE sector, examining its impact on the workload of university staff. The second section focuses on the theme of this thesis, the construction of personal meanings (Reissner 2010; Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003; Watson 2008) of MFAS during restructure (Volkwein & Zhou 2003). The third section looks at the qualitative descriptions of the value and the meanings as MFAS during change. Finally, the last section reviews the construction of self-identity of MFAS under restructure.

Each section of this literature review outlines how these issues link to the construction of meanings by MFAS during restructure in general. The review examines the socially constructed nature of individual identity development, in both organisational culture and organisational performance, within the context of individual experience. It focuses on

some key issues implicated in the constraints and boundaries of constructing a self-identity in a process that is specific to a given situation to provide a practical management approach to dealing with the issues relating to MFAS during change. The key references in this thesis will demonstrate that the working lives of MFAS during restructures should be a major concern for policy makers and senior university management to improve organisational performance and better manage human resources. Also, to address skill shortages and the high proportion of ageing workers, especially in the HE sector, the following literature review will highlight some of the major issues driving organisational restructure and the need for senior management to understand and acknowledge the above issues to better manage a change process.

I begin with quotations from Marginson and Considine (2000, pp.9-10), Coady (2000) and Molony (2000), who have highlighted issues that are significant for HE changes and the working lives of university staff.

Universities are no longer governed by legislation: they are more commonly ruled by formula, incentives, targets and plans. These mechanisms are more amenable to executive-led re-engineering than are the deliberations of a council or an academic board, and less accessible to counter-strategies of resistance. They also fit with management-controlled tools such as soft money budgets, commercial companies, temporary institutes for research or teaching, fundraising and marketing campaigns, all drawn together in a complex web of accountability tied only to the senior executive office. (Marginson & Considine 2000, pp.9-10)

Academic decision making is becoming less collegial and more managerial and autocratic.(Coady 2000 (pp.3-25); Molony 2000 in Winefield et al. 2003, p.60)

Although Marginson and Considine (2000), and Coady (2000) and Molony (2000), wrote these paragraphs ten years ago they are still relevant today. The issues highlighted are still some of the many key concerns for university staff now that the decision making process has shifted from academics to executive managers.

## **The Changing Higher Education**

This section provides a brief summary of HE reforms across the globe, but specifically in Australia, in order to demonstrate the impacts that HE reforms are having on universities and hence on the everyday working lives of university staff today, both academics and administrative staff. The ever increasing intensity of competition for more students nationally and internationally and the demands resulting from social and demographic change have forced national governments to draw up and implement various new national policies (Kerr 1987, 1994; Marginson & Considine 2000, p.46). Some of the best known reforms include the Education Act (1944) and the Bologna Process (1999) that attempted to unify the HE sector in Europe (The Bologna Process 1999). In Britain, the 1963 Robbins Report and the 1996 Dearing Report attempted to enhance a common standard of skills and knowledge. In Australia the key reforms were the following: the 1957 Murray Report on the fairness of resources allocation; the Martin Reform in 1964 which introduced the binary system that created Colleges of Advanced Education (CAE); the 1970s Karmel Reform advocating greater equality of educational access; the Dawkins Reform (1987-1989) that helped to expand education and created a blueprint for a 'user pay' quasi-market system; the 1996 Federal Budget reduction in HE funding; the 2002-2006 Nelson Reform; the Bradley Review of Australian Higher Education in 2008; the Higher Education Support Amendment Bill in September 2011; and the implementation of uncapped undergraduate courses except for some medical courses in 2012 (DEEWR 2011; Marginson & Considine 2000); see Table 2.1.

In common with the UK, the four Australian HE reviews by Murray in 1957, Martin in 1964, Hoare in 1995 and West in 1998, have successfully reduced the autonomy of Australian universities by privatising HE through deregulation and economic rationalism over the past 35 years (Marginson & Considine 2000).

**Table 2.1: A Summary of Historical Key Changes to Australian Higher Education  
(Bessant 1995; Bradley 2008; Dawkins 1988; DEEWR August 2011;  
Fisher 1994 in Gillespie et al. 2001; Marginson 1997c, p.11, 2000;  
Marginson and Considine 2000; Nelson Reform 2002-2006)**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Reform/Budget</b>	<b>Focuses and Key Changes to Australian Higher Education</b>
1957	Murray Report	A Universities Grants Committee was established to develop some fairness in the allocation of resources between institutions.
1964	Martin Report	University was considered as a tool ‘to determine national survival in the modern world requires the Australian community to provide talented young people with opportunities to develop their innate abilities to the maximum’ (cited in Marginson 1997c, p.11). HE was expanded and the binary system introduced (Marginson & Considine 2000) that created the Colleges of Advanced Education (CAE) different from, but equal to, the university sector.
1972-1975	Karmel Report	The problem of poorly performing and under-funded government schools was investigated. The Commonwealth Schools Commission was formed to administer government funding until 1987 which resulted in a massive expansion of Commonwealth funding to schools. It was a precursor for free College of Advanced Education and university education.
1987-1989	Dawkins Reform	It was because of a belief that the economy would become more productive if the education system was adaptive to changing economic situations (Bessant 1995), a Unified National System (UNS) which merged the colleges and the universities was formed. The UNS explicitly created a competitive market where institutions were to compete for teaching and research resources on the basis of institutional merit and capacity (Dawkins 1988).
1996	Federal Budget	The declining federal government funding from 87 per cent in 1986 to 57 per cent of university activities in 1997 was due to a major funding cut, including \$1.8 billion from the Commonwealth Operating grants. (DEETYA 1998a in Marginson 2000). It was a key catalyst for the restructuring of programs and a downsizing of staff (Fisher 1994 in Gillespie et al. 2001).
2002-2006	Nelson Reform	A two-year Commonwealth grant of an additional \$55.2 million for Australian HE was attached to the acceptance of Workplace Productivity Program.
2008	Bradley Report	It aimed to ensure that Australian HE remained competitive on the world stage, with sufficient highly skilled citizens in abroad spectrum of disciplines “to adapt to the uncertainties of a rapidly changing future” (p.xiv). It made 46 recommendations to achieve these goals (see Appendix 10).



<b>Year</b>	<b>Reform/Budget</b>	<b>Focuses and Key Changes to Australian Higher Education</b>
2011-2012	The Higher Education Support Amendment Bill	The legislation was passed in the Senate to increase participation at the undergraduate level in HE. This legislation allows universities to enrol as many undergraduates as they can accommodate in their courses, except for medical courses, to receive full funding under the Commonwealth Grants Scheme.

Towards the end of the 1990s, the emphasis in educational policy was increasingly on lifelong learning (DfES 1998) in Europe, Britain and Australia (The Bologna Process 1999, Nelson Reform 2002-2006). This was a response to the growing recognition that changing working patterns of everyday working life were making more varied demands on an individual's skills set over the span of an individual's working life (Harvey 1997). The term 'employability' was a subset of, and fundamentally contingent, on transformative lifelong learning (Harvey 2000a). These are the terms that are now driving the HE agenda, and decisions about graduate attributes, in this decade. It affects a number of changes in HE and to society as a whole. Today, reforms are continuing in most countries through government policies because of social change, massification of education that "more than 35 per cent of those aged 25-35 years across OECD countries ... higher than the average of 20 per cent for those aged 55-64 years" (OECD 2010, p.56) have completed their HE, mobility of students and staff, and the demands and expectations of students and the business sector. In 2007, government funding was only 33.7 per cent of UTS's total income whereas in 1987 it was more than 70 per cent (University of Technology Sydney Financial Reports 1987, 2007).

### ***Economic rationalism and the Australian higher education sector***

Universities are part of society; they are not magically immune from the forces that have produced transformations across the globe and within Australia. (Coaldrake 2000, p.9)

As in the rest of the world, Australia's demographic changes and fluctuation in the global economy became two of the many factors in changing the Australian HE landscape, particularly after WWII. The Australian Government was faced with challenges ranging from the return of ex-servicemen, to high unemployment in the

1960s, to the need to justify public expenditure, to changing community perceptions, to producing knowledge workers in order to compete in globalised economy. The Australian Government embarked on a list of reforms that aimed at achieving greater efficiencies in the public sector. The following section discusses the most influential reforms that transformed Australian HE. These reforms can be divided into two important periods, namely expansion (Murray Report, Martin Reform, Karmel Reform), and commercialisation (Dawkins Reform, 1996 Federal Budget reduction, Nelson Reform, 2008 Federal Budget, recently passed legislation ‘The Higher Education Support Amendment Bill’ in 2011) (DEEWR 2011; Marginson & Considine 2000). The expansion period resulted in the introduction of a binary system of higher education. The established traditional university system continued, and a new vocational training designed to improve education levels and to provide relevant work oriented training was established. The commercialisation period caused university management to be more accountable in their use of public funding and at the same time more competitive within the HE sector. The changes marked the beginning of a business-orientated approach within the HE sector whereby university management began to focus on other sources of funding for their teaching and their research. At the same time they begin to regard university staff as expenses rather than contributors in whom universities should invest (Marginson 2000).

### ***Expansion***

The Murray Report and the Martin Report were two of the three most significant reforms that helped to expand Australian HE in the 1960s and 1970s. A national framework, the Commonwealth funded Universities Grants Commission, was established after the release of the 1957 Murray Report. The purpose of establishing the Universities Grants Committee was to develop some fairness in the allocation of resources between institutions. However, its recommendations produced more problems in both universities and technical colleges because of an insufficient number of places. By 1960, the issue of offering ‘equal but different’ degrees became a key focus among government officials. The 1964 Martin Report perceived university education as part of “the factors which determine national survival in the modern world require the Australian community to provide talented young people with opportunities to develop

their innate abilities to the maximum” (cited in Marginson 1997c, p.11). This led to the introduction of a binary system: one for traditional universities and one for vocational training (Colleges of Advanced Education, CAE). The principles of the binary system were intended to enhance the diversity of tertiary education, to increase the number of students able to gain a tertiary qualification, to provide vocation relevant training to students who came from a relatively disadvantaged and/or low socio-economic background (Marginson & Considine 2000; Pickersgill et al. 1998).

### ***Commercialisation***

The White Paper (Dawkins 1987) recommended that while the State Governments have the power to legislate for the establishment and governance of new universities, it was the Commonwealth Government that had the power to ensure that funds were allocated in alignment with the national educational objectives, hence, the Dawkins Reform. The reform was set in place by the Hawke Government to focus on the economic bottom line. A new funding model, the Relative Funding Model (RFM), was created under a Unified National System (UNS). The RFM was designed to establish a standardised funding base to allow institutions to compete on an equal basis, called the Relative Funding Model Weightings (Marginson 1997c). The introduction of the UNS increased the number of student enrolments and also led to the introduction of a partial user pays system, commonly known as the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS). The introduction of HECS was seen as a first step to bring government relief from fiscal problems, and to strengthen the university-industry relationship and improve national competition in the sector (Marginson 1997b). HECS is effectively the source of the commercialisation of HE, leading to an expansion of commercial activities in HE, and generating a group of senior entrepreneurial managers (Marginson 1997b). The Dawkins Reform has directly challenged traditional university management, including academic freedom, collegiality and institutional autonomy (Bessant 1995; Marginson & Considine 2000).

In 1996, faced with a federal election and an \$8 billion deficit, the Liberal/National Party government began a major funding cut, including stripping \$1.8 billion from the Commonwealth Operating Grants and leaving \$4.6 billion to fund the research and

teaching activities of universities (Marginson 1997b). This further budget reduction moved the sector more towards a market of competing institutions (Marginson 1997b) and was a key catalyst for the restructure and downsizing of the sector (Fisher 1994 in Gillespie et al. 2001). The universities were forced to seek financial resources other than public funding to support their teaching and research. As Marginson (2000) comments, this is when universities should have focused on investing in the quality of staff; regrettably, university managements chose to view staff as a cost rather than an investment.

In 2003, a proposal to provide \$12.1 billion over a period of ten years to the HE sector was announced. It required universities to commit to workplace reform with more flexibility, under the Workplace Relations Act 1996, to receive part of the Commonwealth funds (some \$55.2 million over two years) from 2006 for the Workplace Productivity Programme. Universities were required to demonstrate the following key features: evidence of a fair and open performance management system which links salary movements to an individual's performance, and evidence that an institution is actively offering individual employment arrangement to employees. It was recommended universities should respond actively instead of passively to the influence of globalisation and massification of HE (Marginson 2006; Nelson Reform 2002-2006).

In the 2007-2008 Federal Budget, under Education for Life, the Liberal/NP government announced "\$4 billion investment over four years to the portfolio, along with a \$5 billion capital investment to create a Higher Education Endowment Fund". However, the \$5 billion capital investment was restricted to a predefined project in infrastructures in each university (see Appendix 5) that the Better Universities Renewal Funding (BURF) (see Appendix 6) provided for the following priorities: information and communication technology, laboratories, libraries and student study spaces, teaching spaces and student amenities (DEEWR 2007). This generous capital investment fund did not provide the necessary long-term focus for the universities sector which urgently needed extra funding to repair existing infrastructures and provide for general maintenance (DEST 2007-2008 Budget) because the approved capital investment fund had to be expended by 30 June 2011.

The push for universities to operate more efficiently and with less government control meant that “universities should be more deregulated” (Norton 2007) which became possible in the 2008 Bradley Review of the Australian Higher Education. In the context of national competitiveness, the core of the HE review was to set a target for university education such that “40% of 25 to 34 year olds [were] to have at least a Bachelor-level qualification by 2020” (Bradley 2008, p.xiv), and that students from low socio-economic backgrounds were to comprise 20 per cent of undergraduates by 2020 (Bradley 2008, p.xiv).

On 14 September 2011, to prepare Australia “to have highly skilled people able to adapt to the uncertainties of a rapidly changing future” (Bradley 2008, p.11), the legislation of “The Higher Education Support Amendment (Demand Driven Funding System and Other Measures) Bill 2011” was passed in the Senate to increase participation at the undergraduate level in HE. Under the legislation, the supply of Commonwealth-supported places will be uncapped and base funding between disciplines will “reflect the relative cost for different disciplines or modes of teaching” (Lomax-Smith, Watson & Webster 2011, p.14). Universities are now allowed to enrol as many undergraduates as they can accommodate in their courses, except in medical courses, to receive full funding under the Commonwealth Grants Scheme (CGS) (DEEWR 2011). The full impact of the demand-driven system on the HE sector is far too early to evaluate at this stage (Group of Eight, 2012, No 3, Feb). However, “without increased resources and attention to learning needs, attrition will increase or the quality of student learning outcomes will fall” (Group of Eight 2012, No 3, Feb, p.5). Further to the above issues, there is also a concern that the Higher Education Support Amendment Bill may potentially lead to a misallocation of student places into high demand courses and unintentionally cause skills shortages in some low demand degrees (Group of Eight, 2012, No 3, Feb).

As shown above, the Australian Federal Government has been able to ‘direct’ the HE sector using various policies and reviews that have covered a wide range of issues, including industrial relations, student intake, discrimination policies and research policy (Coaldrake 1995). The publicly funded universities now operate in a competitive environment, similar to that of the private sector, competing for ‘clients’ – students—and for new sources of revenue. Hence, the establishment of property investments, offshore

programs, short courses, executive courses, and the introduction of domestic fee-paying students and of international students.

The impact of the continued reduction of international students in 2010 and 2011, plus further reduction in 2012, together with the implementation of the new market-driven model on 1 Jan 2012, will potentially create stronger competition among universities to “poach students” (Rosenberg 2012; Trounson 2011). Universities, including the Group of Eight, will need to adopt and apply different strategies to recruit students and to solicit funds to remain competitive and to sustain their operations (Gallagher 2012).

Various universities have adopted the following measures to constrain their costs: lowering staff-student ratios, increasing the use of casual staff or contracted staff for teaching, reducing subject offerings, constraining access to academic staff for out-of-class support, and deferring maintenance and necessary investment in infrastructure (Gallagher 2012; Marginson 1997a, 2007; Marginson & Considine 2000). At the same time, the following universities have decided to have the latest facilities and buildings and invest in research-intensive academics with retrenchment of both non-academic staff and of less research-focused academics, despite a record operating surplus for Australian universities (see Table 2.2): La Trobe University (Trounson 2011), Macquarie University (Lane 2011), University of Melbourne (Perkins 2009; Redman 2011), University of Sydney (Tay 2011), Victoria University (Zavan 2012).

**Table 2.2: Operating Surpluses by University (higher education operations), 2010  
(DEEWR Media Release Nov 2011)**

<b>University</b>	<b>Surplus (\$m)</b>
University of New South Wales	141.1
Australian National University	137.2
University of Sydney	113.7
Griffith University	109.8
University of Queensland	106.1
Macquarie University	100.6
University of Wollongong	100.4
La Trobe University	99.2
Deakin University	83.0
University of South Australia	70.0
University of Adelaide	64.1
University of Western Sydney	61.4
RMIT University	58.8
Flinders University	56.4
University of Tasmania	54.5
University of Melbourne	53.6
Monash University	53.1
University of Western Australia	52.8
Queensland University of Technology	47.2
Swinburne University	45.3
Curtin University of Technology	40.9
University of Newcastle	36.5
Murdoch University	32.4
University of Technology, Sydney	29.8
Victoria University	23.6
Australian Catholic University	22.2
Edith Cowan University	21.0
Charles Darwin University	20.5
University of Ballarat	18.5
James Cook University	18.4
University of Notre Dame Australia	17.8
Charles Sturt University	16.8
University of the Sunshine Coast	16.3
University of Southern Queensland	14.6
University of Canberra	8.0
Southern Cross University	5.4
University of New England	2.3
Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	-0.5
Central Queensland University	-6.3
All Institutions	1,946.4

However, with a need of over \$2 billion to cover capital works and maintenance backlogs across ten universities (Charles Sturt University, Macquarie University, Southern Cross University, University of Sydney, University of New England, University of New South Wales, University of Newcastle, University of Wollongong,

University of Technology Sydney, University of Western Sydney), this projects a difficult financial position for the above universities (NSW Auditor-General's Report 2011).

Since the late 1970s there have been profound changes in HE. Significant challenges, such as the adaption of advanced technology, especially information technology, increasing government monitoring of public investment in the HE sector, changing nature of the workforce in both academe and administration, survival of financial viability, and global competition have induced a series of restructures in Australian universities (Frolich, Schmidt & Rosa 2010; Gallagher 2010; Garvin 1993; Harman 2003, pp.355-357; Lomax-Smith et al. 2011; West 2006). Management techniques and practices including strategic planning, outcome-focused resource allocation, performance management and performance improvement, and quality management were thought to be the key to achieving greater efficiencies in the sector (Coaldrake 1995; Coaldrake & Stedman 1999).

### ***Entwinement of the role of the university***

Under the contracting financial resources operating environment and the change in student and employer expectations from universities, the pressures of changing organisational culture, growing financial uncertainty, increasing accountability mechanisms, changing technology and changing in teaching and learning delivery (Lomax-Smith et al. 2011, p.vii), intensifying responsive and efficient quality systems have had the greatest impact on the universities' organisational structure and administrative systems (Coaldrake & Stedman 1999). Stevenson (2000) stated that the conventional administration and academic affiliation is structured around matrix relationships that are bureaucratic, political, collegial and increasingly economically focused. The traditionally complex university organisational structure (Calabrese & Shoho 2000) creates a historically-based power struggle between administrative staff and educators (Dill 1999; Mintzberg 1980). Cohesive co-operation between academic staff and operational administrators is required if better adaptation of limited financial resources to their existing frameworks is to occur. It can be argued that without significant change, the future operating efficiency of a university, as assessed by its



potential students, may be in doubt in today's highly competitive HE environment (Dill 1999; Lomax-Smith et al. 2011; McInnis 1998).

With the introduction of uncapped university places and the demand-driven model in 2012, Professor Davis points out, "from now, universities must compete directly for students and, should they fail to attract sufficient students, presumably amalgamation or closure must follow" (Hall 2012). Under the current market-driven approach, there is a risk for newer universities and regional universities may be forced to consolidate their offerings in order to survive. The reason is that, as shown in Table 2.2, a number of younger universities have had a low double digit operating surplus in 2010 and in some cases a marginal loss (DEEWR Reports 2010), which means that they have to rely on "their key segments (particular international students) and key courses (e.g. business, accounting and management programs) to sustain their business models" (p.6). In order to compete in this environment, it is important that universities adopt a talent management approach to recruitment and retention of committed, skilled employees, particularly at times of restructure where there is a notable risk of losing important individuals.

### ***Complexity of the roles of university staff***

As mentioned above, in the present environment universities experience a range of pressures including increasing demands for measurably higher quality of teaching; higher levels of expectation from even more demanding students, and meeting a broad range of demands from accreditation bodies. This constant push for change has created a situation in universities where the roles of administrators are often viewed an imposition to the autonomy of academics due to the expansion of administrative roles and the complexity of administrative tasks. The roles and functions of administrators and academics in the educational environment are far more complex and difficult to understand than what might initially be observed. A factor in the complex relationship between academics and administrative staff is the limited understanding that some have of the 'university authority structure' and the assumption on the part of academic staff that 'the administration' are at fault when changes go wrong (Dobson & Conway 2007, p.130). Dobson and Conway (2007) noted that 'academic mangers, not administrators,

remain in charge of decision making and governance in institutions, while administrators develop and provide critical information and advice to inform such decision', unfortunately, 'in the eyes of many academic staff, administrators and academic managers are the same, particularly when administrators are seen as responsible for implementing changes perceived to be harmful to universities' (p.130). This adds another layer of complexity for MFAS to address in the course of resolving the demands of different key stakeholders', demands that are ever-increasing as the work climate continues to change.

In order to successfully manage change, universities depend upon their strategic organisational goals and the commitment of their staff. The achievement of organisational goals in HE institutions not only relies upon the efforts of academics but also to a large degree on the capability of academics and administrators to work together effectively and professionally. Despite that there are reports of poor relationships between academics and administrative staff (Altbach & Lewis 1996; Conway 1998), and few studies have considered issues of job satisfaction, conflict and stress levels suffered by university administrative staff (Dobson 2000; Dobson & Conway 2003; Volkwein & Zhou 2003). The aim of this study is to understand the impact of organisational change on the working lives of MFAS and their construction of their identity.

Under this business-orientated approach, the corporatisation of education as mentioned above, the challenge for both academe and administration are the fast changing paradigms. University staff are confronted with the tensions and dilemmas of this new work order – corporatisation of education – with the concentration on profit generation. Gornitzka, Kyvik and Larsen (1998) argued that the use of the theory of administrative economies of scale was not appropriate to quantify the number of staff in universities. As Goren (2007) stated, commenting on the 2007 University of Newcastle staff survey, "a good financial 'bottom line' does not necessarily make for a healthy organisation". Universities are significantly different from manufacturing companies in terms of the type of staff, the 'products' that they offer and the complexity of the sector. It is because customers (students) cannot 'purchase' or 'order' product(s) from universities. The 'customer' needs to 'earn a degree' by completing a course of study. Their performance will be marked and graded which is completely different from purchasing a product.

Unfortunately, in the current market-driven model, “students are being consumers rather than political subjects of the nation-state” (Marginson & Considine 2000, p.41). The truth of the matter is, there has been “*a shift in power from academics to students; students are now paying customers who now are empowered to assess academics*” (Senior Lecturer, University A).

Often university staff are expected to transform their existing skill-sets and to modify the way they work to fit into new national policy frameworks, new organisational structure and even new responsibilities. The alteration in working patterns of everyday life has made varied demands on individuals’ skills (Harvey 1997). In spite of the fact that universities are often viewed as one of the key vehicles driving the socialisation of people and the transformation of culture because of their roles in creating knowledge (Katz & Kahn 1978), it remains far from the practice how universities actually adjust their organisational structure to the changes in organisational culture, to support the changing roles of their staff (Ng 2007), to attract and retain talented staff, and to fulfil their new responsibilities as the vehicle to support the national development. How do the changes to job structure affect the relationships between the academics and the administrators? What have universities done to ensure their organisational structures are appropriate for global competition?

### ***Academic and administrative tension***

A number of studies have shown that there are several factors which have contributed to the conflicts and tensions between academics and administrators. Some of the most important findings are academics strongly believe that the culture of individualism is fundamental to academic freedom (Coaldrake & Stedman 1999), the different perceptions of roles, and the expectation of accountability and responsibilities from both groups (Dobson 2000; McInnis 1998). Kogan (2007) notes that the fundamental tension between academics and administrators is the result of their inherently different foci. Academic work is underpinned by ‘the disinterested search for truth and the certification of knowledge on the criteria of logic, evidence and demonstrability. ... Administration has to have a concern for public accountability and for predictability which is not at the top of a research scientist’s head’ (p.170). Although the disappearing

boundary between academic and administrator work (McInnis 1998) have created opportunities for MFAS to take on more responsibilities (Whitchurch 2008), the commercially focused MFAS (Eveline 2004) are faced with historically bureaucratic organisations culture and organisational structure (Altbach 1998; Coaldrake & Stedman 1999; Marginson & Considine 2000; Mintzberg 1980). A significant problem is the deep resistance on the part of academic staff towards the idea of accepting administrators as key players in the management of universities. These factors are in part a construction of the bureaucratic structure of organisations.

Universities are made up of at least three major groups – academics, administrators and students – and each has its own outlook, responsibilities and culture. The administrative staff can be further split into operational support and management groups. The traditional professional and bureaucratic structure is a breeding ground for conflict between academics and administrators. Not surprisingly given this context, there is a strong emphasis on the impact of the current changes on academic work and values (Harman 2000; Marginson 2000; McInnis 2000) but little is mentioned of its impact on administrators. This phenomenon can be characterised by a lack of understanding of the role that administrative staff play and the differences in skills between academics and administrators (Dobson & Conway 2007). Changing an academic's attitude to conform to give priority to a new administrative system may not be viewed as appropriate from the academic's point of view when it does not directly benefit their research or their teaching (Kogan 2007). Often, the changes may create an unnecessarily bureaucratic response from educators. The reasons given by many academics include a lack of available time, different priorities and commitments, and an unwillingness to change. The term 'organisational structure' itself implies a perceived relationship between academic and operational administrator where academics demand influence and place a high value on autonomy (Mintzberg 1980). 'Academics no longer have a monopoly of influence on organisational goals, strategies, structures and cultures. For some this has meant loss of control of their academic agendas, loss of disciplinary location, loss of self-esteem and loss of identity' (Henkel 2007, pp.198-199)

McInnis (1998) found that the traditionally ambivalent relationships between the academics and the administrators have become further strained in the business-like HE sector since the Dawkins Reform (1987) and the 1996 Federal Budget, and that new frustrations and tensions have emerged between the two groups. His findings highlighted that the changes in the HE sector not only require the attention of specialist administrators to carry out the institutional mission to full effect, but also require a group of highly adaptable and flexible academics to respond to the changes.

One aspect of this research is the identification of the contemporary role and function of administrative staff in Australian universities in context of the political environment that academics and administrators operate within during organisational restructure. At the same time the multiple cultures that are inherent in university environments are to be examined with a view to clarifying perceptions of MFAS relating to the impact of organisational restructure under the traditional organisational structures in the university framework. Over the past fifteen years there has been a shift in the educational background and the scope of knowledge of administration staff. In the past a School Certificate or a Higher School Certificate was deemed to be an adequate qualification, while today Bachelor's degree, Master's degree and even Doctorate's (Dooley 2000; Whitchurch 2006, 2008) are commonplace. Some administrators even have the appropriate qualifications and experience to undertake some teaching or curriculum design (Pickersgill et al. 1998; Shelley 2010; Whitchurch 2008).

### ***Academic workload***

Increasingly, universities have been forced to become more accountable for their decision-making process (Deem 1998). Accountability, responsibility and productivity have become fashionable terms in policy discussions and in government agendas (Harman 2003). Often they are used as rational motives in change processes (Harman 2003). Ever since the Dawkins Reform started in 1987, universities (or academics) have gradually lost their autonomy in the current economically-focused regime (Churchman 2004, 2006). Similar results of government changing the traditional practice of the academic world through the Dearing Review of HE were found in the UK (Deem 1998) and in Denmark (De Boer & Goedegebuure 1995).

To remain competitive, academics need to remain vigorous and position themselves in the ‘right’ arena, choosing the ‘right’ methodologies, be able to move fluidly between disciplines and among their peers, and be aware of the new politics (Yates 2004). Today, an academic may be ‘asked’ to perform in the following areas in their 1,630 annual working hours (35 hrs x 48 weeks): teaching, research, supervision, administration of subject(s) or program(s), mentoring, participating in meetings and community engagement. Notwithstanding this, under the paradigm of corporatised universities, executive decision makers are expecting academics to ‘support and embrace’ the top-down ‘university policies and changes’.

As Marginson and Considine (2000, p.235) find in their study of the enterprise university, academics are:

Stretched by the day-today demands of teaching, research and professional service – all of the academics we spoke to were working hard – they had little time to take in university concerns. Mostly, they responded to what little they knew of that bigger picture with an all-too-easy cynicism. Plainly, the Enterprise University is not yet their university. For all its undoubted capacity in new communications, data gathering and informal networking, the more professional university management of this era has yet to succeed in drawing the average academic into its strategic perspectives and its institutional objectives.

Another example of the changing workforce is the change in research due to government policy control. Prior to the 2007 federal election, research policies focused primarily on the impact of research outcomes, requiring researchers to demonstrate that their research has an impact on society. The Research Quality Framework (RQF) focused on assessing the quality and impact of research outcome, the number of successful grants and the rate of doctoral completions. Academic research ability is challenged by their ability to meet the requirements of the Research Quality Framework (RQF). After the 2007 federal election, the short-lived RQF was replaced by another research quality framework, Excellence in Research (ERA). ERA measures a university’s international performance and “all research produced by each discipline cluster within an institution during the reference periods” (ARC 2008, p.6). As Senator Carr said, “for the first time we will be able to measure our achievements against our

peers around the world, and plan the future of research investment” (Media Release 2008).

To some academics, the era of research autonomy is diminishing in this competitive operating environment.

*Being an academic, I thought I have autonomy in my research under the tight economy regime. Unfortunately, the game has changed. I lost the research autonomy too. We need to learn how to document our impact to the real world, outside the academia. (Professor, University A)*

Research on academic workload has been extensive (Forgasz & Leder 2006; Harman 2000; Houston, Meyer & Paewai 2006; McInnis 2000; Winefield et al. 2003) and it is generally agreed that the change in academic workload:

- 1) increased occupational stress;
- 2) led to longer working hours;
- 3) increased staff : student ratios;
- 4) reduced time for teaching and teaching-related activities;
- 5) increased participation in commercial-type activities; and
- 6) reduced time for research due to the increase in administrative and teaching demands.

In 2007, UTS participated in a survey of selected Australian universities, entitled ‘Voice Project’. Although 78% of respondents were satisfied with their jobs at UTS, only 27% of UTS staff took part in the survey. Of the 1736 participants, only 39% rated handling of change management favourably; 34% did so for cross-unit cooperation and 36% for support of managing their workload at UTS. Interestingly, the only groups that did not give a poor rating for the handling of change processes in UTS were senior management (55% favourable), casual administrative staff (55% favourable) and administrative staff levels 1-3 (52% favourable). When asked about support and management, respondents painted a picture of tight resources (45% favourable) and poor career development opportunities (34% favourable). Perhaps the most alarming result in the 2007 NTEU survey was that for Q15: ‘I feel valued as a staff member at my institution’. Only 47%

of general staff and 41% of academics agreed. As informed by another survey, 'Occupational Stress in Australian Universities: A National Survey 2002', by Winefield et al. (2003), issues including (1) lack of sufficient time to work on high priority projects and activities, (2) insufficient staff employed to meet work demands in work area, (3) ever increasing workload, and (4) the lack of support to achieve individual research goals were also raised in the UTS results. The 2012 UTS staff survey result indicated staff satisfaction has decreased since 2009 in team work (by 5%) and in supervisor seeking safety input from staff (by 10%) although there were also improvements (an increase from 2% to 10%) in some other areas (processes, career development, workload management). Gornitzka, Kyvik and Larsen (1998) suggested that academics see the need to spend time on non-academic activities as a burden that limits the time they have available to devote to teaching and research. In an attempt to return academics to what they see as their core work, non-academic tasks are increasingly delegated to administrative staff. A consequence of this is that administrative staff see demands on them increasing both directly in terms of additional work that they must complete and indirectly as the need to develop the additional skills that they need to address the new tasks. As the HE climate changes to place increasing demands on academics, many of these demands are delegated and have the resultant effect of an increase in administrative staff workload.

### ***Ageing Australian workforce***

The issue of an ageing Australian workforce will impact on the selection and retention of available talent from a contracting skilled labour market in the next 10 to 20 years (DEWR 2005; DEEWR 2011). The Commonwealth Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (2005) has recently reported:

Australian is currently undergoing a phase of accelerating population ageing. Over the next five years the estimated impact of population ageing is equivalent to a shortfall of 195000 workers.... New South Wales has the largest share of the forecast national shortfall in workers. (p.3)



Given that there is a low birth rate in Australia and there are fewer young people joining the national workforce, it is estimated that “between 2011 and 2020, the number of persons aged 50 and over in Australia will increase by more than 22 per cent. By 2050 the number aged 50 and over will have increased over 80 per cent, or by 6.4 million” (2011, p.6). The key issue in education is the high number of workers aged 45 years and over, with one in two employees now in this category. As stated in the report, “as the population ages skills shortages could become even more acute, particularly in industries where there are already a high proportion of older workers. The number of workers who are already aged 45 years and over is high and growing” (2005, p.3). “The effect on professionals is forecast to be the same as the all-occupations average, while some lightly lesser skilled occupational groups (Associate Professionals and Advanced Clerical and Service Workers) are forecast to be less affected than average” (DEEWR 2005, p.22). This is an alarming issue as DEWR (2005, p.11) reported: “Education recorded the largest increase in the proportion of workers aged over 45 years and over, up by 13.6 percentage points to 49.4 per cent in May”, and in the 2012 DEEWR report, it said that the Education and Training industry “has a relatively older workforce with almost half the workers aged 45 years or older compare with 38 per cent in all industries” (p.18).

The key concern about skills shortage is the high level of ageing workforce in HE and the impact this will have on the future supply of skills. The DEWR (2005) report urges executive management to be aware of these urgent issues given that, “as labour shortages increase, employers will need to be innovative to attract the shrinking supply of available talent” (p.4). As pointed out in the Bradley Report, it is important for Australia to remain competitive to have sufficient highly skilled citizens in a broad spectrum of disciplines “to adapt to the uncertainties of a rapidly changing future” (Bradley 2008, p.xiv).

There is a need to adjust the recruitment and retention practices as labour shortages increase. It is equally important to realise the diversity and the need of the current and future workforce. The workforce consists of three generations: Baby Boomers (1946-1963), Generation X (1964-1980) and Generation Y (1980-1994) (Raines 1997). Each generation has different expectations of work-life balance and career progression, different levels of education, and different perceptions of value and work ethic. It may

be difficult to recruit university staff, especially at mid-level and senior level, when the baby boomers retire from their current positions. With an increasing demand for specialised skill-sets, for example, excellent financial management knowledge, high-level technological expertise, advanced managerial and organisational skills, practical and sound human resource management knowledge and skills, outstanding logical thinking with a critical mind in all industries, it is important to retain and retrain loyal and committed staff. As pointed out by Marginson & Considine (2000), to survive in the ever-changing HE landscape it is crucial for universities to embrace the institutional loyalty from all staff who have a practical commitment to the institution (p.250), and it is also important to include 'general staff in decision-making' (p.251).

This section has examined issues that university staff encounter under a changing HE. Tension between academic and administrative staff is not only historically driven but it is also culturally driven. Under the paradigm of the corporatised universities, academics inevitably have less time to devote to teaching and research because they are increasingly required to participate in non-academics activities but not in decision-making processes. Henkel (2007) notes that this may lead academics to feel loss of self-esteem and loss of academic identity. On the other hand, the role of administration is to ensure that the university meet its mission and goals whilst remaining publicly accountable and predictable (Kogan 2007). A misperception and general lack of understanding of roles and of requirements for accountability and responsibility on the part of both groups may have deepened the tension between academic and administrative staff, but it adds a particular tension to the working life of MFAS.

## **Theoretical Framework**

Identifying a theoretical framework usually involves identifying key concepts, exploring the relationship between them and finally applying it to the study. This study adopts Lewis, Bebbington, Batterbury, Shah, Olson, Siddiqi and Duvall's (2003) practice, power and meaning as a starting point to study what MFAS experience and how they construct meaning in the climate of change. However, Lewis et al.'s (2003) framework is focused specifically on multi-agency rural development projects. Nevertheless, Lewis et al.'s (2003) statement is relevant:

Likewise, it is only through studying practices that one can understand the ways in which organisations trend towards having a more or less integrative culture shared by staff, or a more fragmentary set of sub-cultures. And finally, it is only through a study of practice that it becomes possible to understand how and why organisations are given the meanings that they are given by people beyond the organisation. (pp.552-553)

When investigating the working lives of MFAS and how they construct identities, what is needed is a conceptual framework that allows an appreciation of the experiences of MFAS related to their working environment, the impact of restructuring on their working lives, and which helps to identify influential factors in their professional growth and in their constructing meaning in work. The main issues drawn from the literature are incorporated into the conceptual framework for this study. These are discussed in the next two sections.

### ***Administrative staff in universities as professional practitioners***

As discussed in the section ‘Academic workload’ above, universities are faced with a wide range of new challenges, including demands for a higher level of accountability of outputs, increasing competition for external funding and increased expectations on the part of business. McInnis’s (1998) study examined the dissolution of boundaries and new tensions between academics and administrators with a view to identification of the critical areas of differences in job satisfaction and morale, work values and morale, work values and motives, and administrators’ perceptions of work styles and conditions. McInnis (1998) surveyed 1281 senior administrators of level HEW 8 and above. The results were compared to an earlier (Australian Research Committee 1993) national survey of academics in Australian universities. McInnis found that the differences in skills, outlook and values between the two groups have become a source of growing tension in the university workplace. McInnis stated:

The most obvious source of tension and potential for everyday conflict in the workplace derived from the lack of acknowledgement administrators felt they received for their increasingly specialist skills and knowledge. (p.170)

and

The second source of tension concerned difference in attitudes towards control and regulation of work. Most administrators believed that academics should be made more accountable for their time and were in favour of efforts to improve academic productivity. (p.170)

McInnis (1998) highlighted that changes in the HE sector not only require the attention of specialist administrators to carry out the institutional mission to full effect, but also a group of highly adaptable and flexible academics to respond to the changes. He also found that the traditionally ambivalent relationships between academics and administrators have become further strained in this new environment, and that new frustrations and tensions have emerged between the two groups. McInnis's paper appears to be an excellent starting point on the differences in orientation to work that form the basis for an important clash of academic and administrative cultures. Another key factor that McInnis identifies is the existence of tension between the older academics who are perhaps losing ground in authority and status, and the new administrators who are taking key roles and expecting recognition as valuable contributors to strategic planning and the decision-making process.

Pickersgill et al. (1998) also raised a concern about 'overlaps' in the functions of academics and administrative staff in their report 'General and Academic: Are they different'? Their study shows that the detailed position descriptions of professional staff made their career progression more difficult compared to academics whose positions are loosely defined. At the same time, an expectation of fluidness in role has made both the academics' and the administrators' positions difficult due to the current rapid changes in the HE sector. Today, most administrative staff are expected to wear 'different hats' in different situations. These include but are not limited to administrator and student adviser (Johnsrud & Rosser 2000). For administrative staff who have managerial responsibility, the role becomes more complicated for their roles are policy-enforcer, trouble-shooter, problem-solver, negotiator and pseudo-carer. They are also required to have multiple skills in order to succeed. Similar findings in the UK have confirmed that universities need the full range of professional skills among their managers and administrators (The Secretary of State for Education and Skills 2003).

*We work on contingencies planning; we are concerned about things that might happen. We think laterally on both simple and difficult matters. (MFAS)*

Despite more than half of university staff being non-academics, the understanding of administrative staff work is under-explored as mentioned above. Conway (1998), Dobson & Conway (2003) and McInnis (1998) all agree that the importance of managing successful relationships between academics and administrators is critical to the future of HE. Adding pressure to these challenges are the changes due to the growing financial uncertainty and increasing level of accountability that have had the greatest impact on the universities' organisational structure and administrative systems (Coaldrake & Stedman 1999; Marginson & Considine 2000). While some of the position descriptions of individual administrators may be well described, problems arise because individual administrators face a range of various demands and expectations from university staff.

### ***Administrative staff during organisational restructure***

Within the limited research on the working life issues of university professional staff (Gornitzka & Larsen 2004; Johnsrud 2003, 2004; Pickersgill et al. 1998; McInnis 1998; Rosser 2000; Szekeres 2006; Whitchurch 2006, 2007, 2008), there is a lack of qualitative studies of the complexity of professional university staff and on the construction of identity of MFAS during organisational restructure. Instead, a large proportion of the studies of such staff were generally "more associated with the prevailing discourse of corporate managerialism" (Szekeres 2006, p.133). Given that some professional staff have the appropriate qualifications and experience that enable them to effectively undertake some teaching or curriculum design (Pickersgill et al. 1998; Shelley 2010; Whitchurch 2008), it is likely that there is a larger dependence on professional staff in the future in terms of these types of work. Liebmann (1986) argues that "Higher Education is, after all, an enterprise of human beings, so it would be surprising to see any serious reduction in its dependence on that very important source to keep it functioning" (p.14).

### ***Value (or lack of value) as administrative staff***

The contributions of mid-level administrative staff – “the unsung professionals of the academy” (p.5) – in the operation and function of universities are hardly mentioned (Rosser 2000). In contrast, they are usually the first group to go under restructure. Rosser (2004) defined mid-level administrators as the “firing-line managers” (p.319) who “have the responsibility to monitor and regulate policies and procedures but rarely have the authority to change, adjust or develop the regulations they enforce” (p.319). Johnsrud and Rosser’s (1999) study confirmed that the degree of support mid-level administrators perceive for their career growth is important to their morale; perceived career mobility is a strong predictor of morale. Their findings implied that differences in work climate or supervisory style have an impact on morale. A smaller institution (such as a community college) may have more positive morale (Johnsrud & Rosser 1999). Their result confirmed that it was important for organisations to manage the perception of individuals because it affected individuals’ morale. Hence, it may affect the performance and retention of mid-level administrators. However, their study did not measure the relationship between morale and perception of opportunities for growth and advancement.

Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser (2000) applied a multilevel structural model to analyse mid-level administrators’ morale issues – worklife, morale and intention to leave. They surveyed a ten-campus university system comprised of one research university, two liberal arts colleges and seven community colleges. Their findings raised the question of balance between a reasonable and an excessive turnover for universities. A similar finding by Scott (1980) also advised collegiate middle-managers “to question their loyalty and commitment” due to “the general lack of regard for administrators by faculty” (p.397). Their results demonstrated that it is important for organisations to seek to build loyalty and commitment among staff because it may affect the way individual staff construct their identities and their understandings of their working lives.

Szekeres’s (2006) study of 37 general staff from HEWS level 3 to directors across different units and how their experience of HE changed over the past five to ten years in three universities in South Australia has more in common with the scale of the present

study. Her study was conducted via an open-ended interview with a focus on their general working lives. However, it did not discuss the construction of identity especially under restructuring. Szekeres's study offers a case study exploration of the experience of 37 general staff, and in doing so helps exploring the lack of knowledge of the working lives of administrative staff. Szekeres's study offers valuable insights into the complexity of the working lives of general staff. Her study concluded that 'administrative staff are the instruments of the corporation of the university' (p.144). However, what has been missing to date in the study of general staff has been an identity study of the working lives of a specific group, MFAS, under restructuring. The importance for an in-depth and detailed understanding of the issue is distinctly summarised by Rosser (2000):

The significance of their midlevel role lies in maintaining a balance between their supervisors' directions and delegations and the needs and constraints of faculty, students, and public who require their support and services.... Clearly, midlevel administrators contribute significantly to the structure of the academic organization by serving and supporting the primary functions of teaching, research and service. (pp.7-8)

### ***Meaning (a relevant title) as administrative staff***

Dobson (2000) and Whitchurch (2006, 2007) summarised a history of name changes for administrators from 'general staff' to 'others', to 'non-academic' and finally to 'administrator'. Clearly, the terminology is historically- and contextually-bound, and the absence of a term to describe the role of administrative staff may serve to further complicate the problem. The lack of understanding of the administrative workings of universities on the part of many, particularly those employed as academics, is an additional problem that is demonstrated in this quotation:

The difference between 'governance' and 'administration' came in an article in *The Age* (1999) by Robert Manne. Like so many others, Manne (an academic from La Trobe University) criticised the 'administration' in general, rather than focusing his ire on the ex-academics who ultimately run our universities. He

demonstrated little knowledge of either governance structures, or of who it is who actually run our universities. (Dobson 2000, p.208)

With all these name changes, it is critical to ask whether administration is a profession. According to the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), a profession is defined as:

A disciplined group of individuals who adhere to high ethical standards and uphold themselves to, and are accepted by, the public as possessing special knowledge and skills in a widely recognised, organised body of learning derived from education and training at a high level, and who are prepared to exercise this knowledge and these skills in the interest of others. Inherent in this definition is the concept that the responsibility for the welfare, health and safety of the community shall take precedence over other considerations. (ACCC 2007)

Universities are now operating in a rapidly changing environment; factors such as lifelong learning are forcing universities to adopt flexible structures that can adapt quickly to market demands (Harvey 2000a). Altbach (1998) explains that:

as academic institutions become larger and more complex there will be increasing pressure for a greater degree of professional administration. ... The administration of higher education will increasingly become a profession, much as it is in the United States. (p.15)

Within this new work environment, focus is highly concentrated on university strategies and sound financial management. While this is happening, administrative staff have to continue to learn both on and off the job because this is what is expected of them. Although administrative staff receive training through day-to-day work or through instruction from senior-level staff, they are also sent to learn new skills that enable them to adopt to new work-related systems. While they are away from their offices on training, administrative staff are still expected to complete their day-to-day work.



Dobson (2000) stated that, “there is need for a greater understanding by academic staff that the changes in higher education have been difficult for general staff too” (p.210). He further emphasises that,

It is probably fair to say that most general staff both ‘know their place’, and realise that their role is not the ‘main game’, but perhaps some academic staff haven’t caught up with the fact that a professional general staff does much to support and to enhance the student experience at university. (Dobson 2000, p.209)

A strong acknowledgement of the contribution of administrators is made by Dobson and Conway (2003) in their provocatively titled ‘Fear and Loathing in University Staffing: The Case of Australian Academic and General Staff’:

For administrators to be able to formally claim their position in the division of labour in universities, they will need to clarify the knowledge base, skills and expertise they bring to university management and, perhaps most importantly, to define how their work contributes to the teaching and research that is the core business of universities...that universities today are not run by academics alone but by partnerships between academics and administrators. (Dobson & Conway 2003, pp.131-132)

Dobson and Conway (2003) argue that a clear clarification of what academics and administrators do is important in discussing the blurring roles of the two groups. They go on to say that “Administrators today are a heterogeneous group. The range of skills, knowledge and qualifications they bring to universities is significant” (p.130). In their study, Dobson and Conway (2003) characterise the terms ‘career administrators’ and ‘academic managers’ as follows: academic managers are the ex-academics who have taken up administrative roles such as Dean, Associate Dean and Vice-Chancellor, whereas the career administrators are those who work on the operational aspects of universities.

It is important to note that articles by Dobson (2000) and Dobson and Conway (2003) look at the importance of terminologies to administrators and their impact on a collaborative and fruitful working relationship between the two groups. Nonetheless,

their proposal to create a concept of ‘partnership’ between academics and administrators will most likely be rejected by academics. Academics may respond in an unnecessarily bureaucratic manner rather than offer their support. A common theme in the three articles drawn on above (Dobson 2000; Dobson & Conway 2003; McInnis 1998) is an apparent misunderstanding on the part of academics of the role of administrative staff and the contribution that they make. They all agree that the importance of managing successful relationships between academics and administrators is critical to the future of HE. It is evident from these papers that many academics are unaware of the fact that academics and academic managers govern universities and it is the administrators that manage them. As a result, the concept of ‘partnership’ has developed that defines a new relationship between academics and administrators. This suggests that throughout this period there was a growing professionalism among administrative staff in the HE sector, which was in turn reflected in the employment of executive administrative staff and in the position descriptions. However, this singular normative term ‘support staff’ implies a lack of knowledge of or interest in the types of work, role or contribution that support staff have made to the operation and function of universities. Rhetorically, what is the function of support staff and who are support staff? Scott (1980) emphasised that it is important for mid-level administrators to engage in their relevant professional associations for professional growth and network support in his study on collegiate middle managers at 20 colleges and universities of different sizes and types in America.

The next section discusses the construction of identity of MFAS through their day-to-day work during restructure. It focuses on the impact of organisational culture, the value of understanding individual identity from an organisational performance perspective, and the influence of individual experience in self-identity formation.

### ***Identity of mid-level faculty-based administrative staff under restructure***

*Gradually, the work became more demanding. As everyone got busier we began to work more in “silos” and much of the social interaction between areas was gradually lost. In my case, I was expected to become more and more proficient in a variety of areas with little or no real assistance or training. Actually, you were expected to be an “expert” in everything but this was not rewarded or, in*

*many cases, recognised. It was just expected. There was little time allocated to allow me to develop new skills and this had to be done by fitting this in and juggling the rest as best as I could. In some ways the university began to see people as just work units and treated them as such. (MFAS)*

As mentioned in Chapter 1, Whetten and Godfrey (1998) in their book *Identity in Organizations: Building Theory Through Conversations* say that, “For Plato, identity is a form that exists metaphysically and instantiates differently in each person; Aristotle’s portrait of the self provides an early hint of the view that there can be many different identities housed within an individual”. (p.18)

Identities of academics and administrators are not formed in isolation from universities and the professional affiliations of their work. Their membership changes with different associations and are subject to place and time. Marginson and Considine (2000) argue that academic culture(s) was/were “more robust” (p.193) in the pre-1986 universities, especially the ‘sandstones’ (p.230), but that they are comparatively weak in the ‘Unitechs’ (p.230) and new universities and thus provide “more scope for management to remake the institutions” (p.230). Furthermore, they argue that, “the Sandstones’ coherence is derived from grounded academic cultures joined uneasily to street-wise general staff and competent institutional managers, plus a long-standing social role that is continuously reinforced from outside” (p.237). They further comment that other universities are “less dependent on autonomous academic cultures” (p.237). Hence there are different organisational cultures and types of academics and administrative staff in the traditional universities and the post-1996 universities.

In addition, universities are moving towards ‘business-like’ operations because of the reduction of government funding. This movement has also attracted groups of highly qualified professional administrators with expert knowledge, either from the business or the government sector. As Eveline (2004) comments in her book *Ivory Basement Leadership: Power and invisibility in the changing university*:

after experience in business and government, they are less likely to accept the traditional view that decision-making is the sole responsibility of academic staff, and that their role is as ‘handmaiden’, to maintain ‘good process [and thereby

avoid] accountability for the much more difficult task of achieving good outcomes. (p.134)

Whitchurch (2008) also stated that,

this configuration of professional space means that identities and voices associated with particular roles are being disturbed, and are being re-made by individuals, according to their particular circumstances and positioning, creating a dynamics that cannot be understood simply by referring to organisation charts or job descriptions. ...In order to articulate that 'something other', new ways of considering professional identities and voices are needed. (p.82)

In everyday conversations and dealings with other university staff, I have started to rethink the definition of academics and administrators in the 21<sup>st</sup> century in terms of qualifications, abilities, capabilities and, most of all, identities. Personally, I believe the ability and willingness of an individual to adapt to a changing environment is critical for ongoing success. Part of the difficulty can be put down to the traditional perceptions and expectations of academics and administrators in university environments. McInnis (1998) found that the traditionally ambivalent relationships between the academics and the administrators have become further strained in the business-like HE sector since the Dawkins Reform (1987) and the 1996 Federal Budget, and that new frustrations and tensions have emerged between the two groups. His findings highlighted that the changes in the HE sector not only require the attention of specialist administrators to carry out the institutional mission to full effect, but also a group of highly adaptable and flexible academics to respond to the changes.

### ***Conceptualisation of self-identity under restructure: identity and individual experience***

This section will discuss the concept of self-identity during restructure in relation to MFAS. As discussed in the previous sections, political, environmental and social changes gave rise to a new group of administrative staff who are better educated (Pickersgill et al. 1998), are equipped with commercial business skills (Eveline 2004), and have new perspectives on the professionalisation of the work of administrative staff

(Whitchurch 2008) which have and will continue to reshape HE. The preliminary review of the literature shows limited research into the complexity of self-identity construction of MFAS during restructure in the HE sector. Literature relating to the three research questions of this study (see Chapter 1) show they are clearly not well represented in the literature. This study will help fill a void in the scholarship of HE while providing data and knowledge to better manage the human resources issues at universities, especially during restructure.

The idea of self-identity is rooted in Mills's (1959) *The Sociological Imagination*. In Mills's opinion, the sociological imagination helps individuals to step outside of their personal worldview and to understand the influence that events and social structure have on their behaviour and thinking. Thus sociological imagination might enrich the individual's understanding of their personal issues.

Identity research has been a key notion in the fields of sociology, organisational studies and social psychology. While many identity researchers have acknowledged and value the development of identity and have provided new ways to enrich the understanding of organisational structures and the management of diversified workforces, much remains unknown about the construction of self-identity in social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner 1986) and in organisational identity theory (Albert & Whetten 1985; Whetten 2006). Many researchers who study social identity are concerned with how individuals see themselves; however, the construction of self-identity forms a small part in social identity study, "particularly in terms of value and emotional attachment" (Alvesson, Ashcraft & Thomas 2008, p.10; Tajfel 1981 in Tajfel 1982; Stets & Burke 2003).

For the most part, the construction of individuals' identity is simply a subset of collective identity within the domain of identity in organisational studies. As defined by Turner and Reynolds (2004, p.261) the individual is part of a 'we' in social identity. Self-identity appears to be a key stabilising social factor of the individual in his/her accepted role in the hierarchy of a social structure: "we mean to promote critical, reflexive exploration of the larger social and political implications entailed in the ways individuals cope with the interface among self-understandings, ideals and a frequently imperfect and hostile world" (Alvesson et al. 2008, p.12).

Sveningsson and Alvesson (2003), Reissner (2010) and Watson (2008) suggested more in-depth empirical studies and process-based analysis of individual identity construction in different processes were needed for example during the organisational restructure. The lack of understanding of the impact of specific processes such as change management on the working life of individuals (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003) and “the absence of clear confirmation of people’s skills and accomplishment” (Alvesson & Sveningsson 2011, p.171) are some fundamental characteristics of self-identity formation. By understanding how individuals construct their self-identity in a workplace setting under restructuring, it is possible to leverage this knowledge as a more holistic change strategy for the benefit of other areas seeking to improve organisational performance (Reissner 2010). The key notion is how individuals construct their identity at a personal level inside the boundary of their whole (work and personal) selves at work.

In a similar way to Kuhn (2006) in his research on the amount of time that workers allocated to their organisation was related to identity work and identity regulation, I see the etiological approach and suggestion of individual identity formation as “the conception of the self reflexively and discursively understood by the self” (p.1340) in order to make sense of their experience. The “questions of identity are heightened during periods of transformational shift at the level of society, occupation, organization, or individual life course” (Alvesson et al. 2008, p.20). Whatever the specific context, function or situation of the individual, self-identity needs to be looked at from a process-specific perspective as mentioned above.

Central to this study is the construction of self-identity through the lens of a constructionist, as espoused by Kuhn (2006) and Mills (1959). There are a number of issues affecting the construction of individual identity that have become apparent and warrant more attention, but they have received limited consideration. In the case of MFAS, the issues of conflict of roles, forced job change and perception as a group of staff who are not valued in financial management discussions are particularly important in the self-identity formation of MFAS during restructure. To bring life to the construction of individual identity of MFAS during restructure, the study treats self-identity as a term composed of multiply layered richness and ambiguity. Like many

discussions in day-to-day life, the discussion of 'self-identity' is flexible and situational, enabling the concept to adapt well to a variety of contexts.

This articulation is critical to an appreciation of the understanding of individual identity because the self-esteem and the self-worth of each organisational actor are influenced by the individual's expectation and their experience of changes (Sommer & Baumeister 1998). This is particularly the case for a constructive and productive restructure outcome (Reissner 2010), which requires further attention to self-identity formation in organisational change. The following three sections will consider three factors that have considerable influence in the construction of self-identity during restructure: organisational culture, organisational performance and the individual experience.

### ***Identity formation under restructure: organisational culture***

Individual identity is formed around the ways in which organisational actors construct meanings through their perceived significant personal experience of past events and of their current situation (Gergen 1971; Gergen & Gergen 1983; Hall 2000). The view that the perceived meanings of the organisational actor are continually interwoven with their perceived world is part of the process of constructing their self-identity. It encourages a dualistic relation between organisation and organisational actor. And yet, "organisation means different things to different people in different moments" (Ashcraft & Alvesson 2007 in Alvesson et al. 2008, p.13). This in turn creates a frame of reference for the perceived self-projected world which will act on the development of the individual's worldview. Further to this individual's worldview is a subjective view which is centred on the organisational actor's experience at a given moment. At work, the creation and the significance of meanings are bound by the existing organisational culture and organisational structure, and the interpretations of meanings are affected by individuals' experience at work. In the view of the interpretivist, the notions of meanings are tentative, negotiable, renegotiable (Whetten & Godfrey 1998), contextually determined and socially constructed. There is a polyphony of meanings and values when the individual reflects upon and interprets each activity in their everyday life (Pullen & Linstead 2005). Therefore, an individual, by being attributed to the significant

momentary events or states of the individual's experience, can have different identities in different situation (Whetten & Godfrey 1998).

As stated above, one of the many factors that can affect self-identity formation is organisational culture. The meanings that an organisational actor constructs via verbal and nonverbal communication are concealed in the ongoing processes of social relations and in the layers of social practices that are subject to organisational culture. Yet, "how we understand ourselves is shaped by larger cultural and historical formations, which supply much of our identity vocabularies, norms, pressures and solutions, yet which do so in indirect and subtle ways" (Alvesson et al. 2008, p.11).

Organisational culture, as reflected and created in workplace settings, is understood as a shared pattern of assumptions, beliefs and behaviours learned by groups of individuals while its members are attempting to make sense of their everyday corporate life to deal with issues such as organisational change, and both internal and external politics. Organisational culture includes some of the unwritten rules that are unique to a workplace, acquired over many years, and is shaped by the people who work there and by the history of an organisation. It is also a perceptual experience of how decisions are made and what behaviours are acceptable in a particular setting. Often, organisational culture is created and promoted by senior staff who may informally encourage particular behaviours or formally reward approved activities (Bolman & Deal 2011). It impacts strongly on the working lives of people in an organisation. In restructure, the influence of organisational culture plays an important factor in self-identity formation (Pullen & Linstead 2005). It affects how individuals view their treatment throughout the process and the expectation of the individual of the process of restructuring (Reissner 2010).

Following on from the above, in the process of restructuring there are considerable uncertainties that can have significant effects on individuals' self-confidence. The two interwoven problems, the workplace-related uncertainty of the job (Volkwein & Zhou 2003) and the precariousness of his/her personal future, create excessive stress and pressure on the ability of organisational actors to overcome any potential problems because of the indefiniteness of things surrounding individuals. The indeterminate and speculative nature of individuals' futures prevents them from making sense of their situations (Volkwein & Zhou 2003). As individuals project their own fears onto



imagining what the restructuring process might look like, their expectation of the restructure (Reissner 2010) and their future or their current job (Volkwein & Zhou 2003), it is inevitable for individuals to haemorrhage imagination through their feelings and emotions.

The result is that the individual will continue to try to find ways to set a boundary or artificially create a separation between problems at work and troubles in personal life. In addition, internal uncertainties in the workplace can manifest themselves, particularly when there is a lack of a well-organised managed restructuring process and or there is a lack of sound understanding of how to manage affected staff among management. Manifested workplace uncertainties can continue to destabilise an individual's ability to create a workable solution to handle his/her stress. Nevertheless, some of these uncertainties are constrained by a subdued organisational structure and an organisational culture that are beyond the control of the individual (Volkwein & Zhou 2003).

The next section will briefly discuss the importance of studying self-identity formation in organisational performance during restructure.

### ***Self-identity under restructure: organisational performance***

As indicated above, some researchers in organisational studies have shifted their attention from self-identity studies to a specific focus on the impact of conditions of change (Alvesson 2010; Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003; Watson 2008) due to the fact that "identity is viewed as central for issues of meaning and motivation, commitment, loyalty, logics of action and decision-making, stability and change, leadership, group and intergroup relations, organizational collaborations, etc." (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003, p.1163). Thus, I infer that this re-focusing on self-identity construction in restructure is critically important to organisational performance. A number of recent studies on self-identity have addressed some of the issues relating to personal identity construction (Reissner 2010; Watson 2008) in restructure.

Reissner (2010) examined the construction of self-identity during restructure in three manufacturing firms in the UK, South Africa and Russia, with a focus on understanding how the restructure process affected the way organisational actors constructed their

identity due to their organisational change experience. Her study was conducted via open-ended interviews, taking a constructionist case study approach. In each firm 30 interviews were carried out with organisational actors of different backgrounds. The results from Reissner's study suggested that the expectation organisational actors had of their experience in the restructure had an impact on how each organisational actor constructed meanings at work. Reissner (2010) found that a badly planned restructure would induce bad feelings in individuals, with "reduced levels of confidence, self-esteem and self-worth" (p.297). Her study offered a rare view on the change journey of affected organisational actors. It confirmed that bad organisational change had significant overall influence on organisational performance. This was because when staff started to question their overall self-worth in an organisation, it would affect "organisational shared meanings, collective identities and a sustainable future" (Reissner 2010, p.297).

Watson's (2008) investigation of identity in a telecommunications development and manufacturing company suggested that individual identity construction research should be concerned with individuals "making connections 'outwards' to social others as well as 'inwards' towards the self" (p.140). He interviewed two managers about identity work between September 1990 and August 1991 in Britain. He emphasised that the most obvious way to examine "the details of human lives in a specific settings such as work organizations" is "using combinations of ethnographic, interview and documentary techniques" in order to "fulfil Mills' mission of helping people 'grasp what is going on in the world, and to understand what is happening in themselves at minutes points of the intersection of biography and history within society'" (Watson 2008, p.120). His study also provides support for ethnography and a documentary analysis approach in studying self-identity formation.

Although some individuals may be able to maintain an optimistic view of things during restructure, there is still limited understanding of the construction of self-identity among management who are responsible for improving organisational performance. This reflects on the existing difficult conditions of a bound personal identity construction in a workplace setting. To a large extent it is subject to organisational structure and organisational culture as emphasised above.

As Whetten and Godfrey (1998) comment in their book *Identity in Organizations: Building Theory Through Conversations* that organisational identity “defines who we are in relation to the larger social system to which we belong. Identity is affected by organizational culture and also by other meaning-making systems with which the self interacts” (p56). “Although culture provides the systems of rules that defines a social system, identity provides the contextual understanding of those rules that govern people’s understanding of themselves in relation to the larger social system” (p.57). Hence, it is important for management to build a positive collective identity and to improve organisational performance especially during restructure. From the standpoint of organisational performance, it is important to have a detailed understanding of the construction of self-identity, specifically that, “individual identity development at the workplace under conditions of change is not only a personal, but also an organisational issue that ought to be taken seriously by researchers and practitioners alike” (Reissner 2010, p.297).

Further compounding the impact of restructure on individuals in constructing meanings is the age discrimination at work for those who are over 50 years of age (Financial Service Council 2012). The Financial Service Council 2012 report on ‘Attitudes to older workers’ confirms the existence of an unwritten rule – age discrimination in the workplace. This is due to the general public’s obsession with youth at work, neglecting the value of maturity and experience of workers who are over 50 years of age in organisational performance. The issue potentially adds another layer of contextual uncertainty to older workers’ self-identity formation due to the fear of not being able to find another job at their age.

In my view, an organisation is composed of two physical objects, the buildings as they stand on the ground and the staff who work in the buildings. The building itself has no feeling or empathy. However, it is in that enchanted space, the building, where staff construct meanings that are perceived and felt as real by individuals. A better understanding of individual identity formation would assist management to better manage the change process to achieve the best outcomes of human resource management, i.e. organisational performance, via suitable and appropriate “employee motivation and performance” (Reissner 2010, p.289).

The professional identity of MFAS is ambiguous and ill-defined under economic rationalisation. It seems that the contributions administrative staff have made are being played down in the restructuring process (Gornitzka et al. 1998; Rosser 2000). Given that the setting of a workplace contributes to the construction of self-identities at any given time, every employee has a voice to express their views, to say whether their contribution is positive or negative in the eyes of management. A specific process, such as restructure, does affect both the personal self and the work self of organisational actors (Reissner 2010). At the same time, it is crucial to note that whatever meanings are constructed by the individual are real to the individual.

Due to these reasons, it is important for management to know the issues and constraints affecting the construction of individual identity at work under the change process. Knowing them helps management to better manage any restructure and achieve a stable organisational collective identity (Reissner 2010) that each individual has a different and unique self that affects his or her self-identity formation. This is particularly relevant when “depicting identity as hierarchically integrated into dominant notions of self or, conversely, as fragmented into manifold, simultaneous and shifting notions of self” (Alvesson et al. 2008, p.6).

The following section discusses the relevant literature on individual experience in self-identity formation.

### ***Self-identity under restructure: the individual experience***

Alvesson et al.’s (2008) argue that, “identity holds a vital key to understanding the complex, unfolding and dynamic relationship between self, work and organisation” (p.9). Given most organisations focus more on continuous improvement in organisational performance, a better understanding of constructing a preferred idealised organisational collective identity will appeal to finance-focused management teams or leaders who manage employees. As Pate, Beaumont and Pryce (2009) state,

professional identity is relatively stable as it is less well defined. In contrast organisational identity and organisational context is likely to be highly variable due to changes in senior management, business processes and nature of the

business environment, therefore organisational identity is potentially extremely vulnerable. (p.334)

Unfortunately,

the ambition of objectively manipulating persons in the workplace, their attitudes, values, and beliefs, is unattainable, ... the complexity of our selves is such that it seems virtually impossible to anticipate the effects that a set of supposedly objective measures would have in each of us. (Moreno 2001, p.382)

Individual identity is often tarnished by the perilous stigma of being who the individuals are, the type of job they have chosen to take, and the existing organisational culture that holds a key factor in influencing self-identity formation (Gergen 1971, 1991).

Interestingly, in the discussion of self-conceptualisation in his book *The Concept of Self*, Gergen (1971) was concerned with “the concept of self rather than with experience” (p.18), with how individuals “interpret themselves, their actions, or their sensory inputs” (p.18). It is assumed that the individual “has some basic concept” (p.19) of himself, hence “it has a marked impact on his social conduct” (p.19). The concept of self is formed part of the understanding in the process of constructing an identity of the individual. The self is composed of individual experiences but it is not a physical object. It requires an assumption to understand or to make sense of the self although the self has no rules (Gergen 1971). However, some scholars view self-identity as a representative of the individual’s absolute and essential sameness, hence, an individual has one identity (Ferguson 2009), whereas some postmodernists (Lawler 2008, p.3) view identity as having plurality, flexibility and fluidity which individuals hold, or that individuals identify with multiple identities.

The identity of a self takes in all aspect of an individual’s lives, both inner and outer aspects, to form the notion of the individuality of the individual. These include “amount of learning”, “stimulus situation” and “motivation” of the individual (Gergen 1971, p.33). It emphasises the importance of self-identity which is what allows individuals to choose their own personal label, to renegotiate their self and to enable reforming. As mentioned in the section above on organisational culture, self-identity provides individuals with the means to redress the way they see themselves and to re-define

themselves from what they learnt in their past experience as the situation demands. It allows reflexivity in the individual according to their surrounding social circumstances (Gergen 1971, 1991).

However, as “the worldview held by each of us is the result of a multiple of interconnected horizons; many of them will remain unconscious for all our lives” (Moreno 2001, p.382). It is obvious that the construction of self-identity is a fluid process. And with some degree of flexibility, the self-identity of the individual can be adjusted, but it is largely dependent upon the intersection of the individual’s belief and the position of the individual in the social structures (Moreno 2001; Stets & Burke 2003). Thus, the ‘recognition’ of self-identities as multiple and changing is an important appreciation that may provide individuals with the capacity to actively change their self-identity, subject to various factors surrounding the individual.

Extending Moreno’s (2001) research on the construction of self-identity to the issues of what is important to the individual and what is real to the individual is totally subjective. As the individual tries to re-create a sense of self and the meaning of his or her work or the meaning of his or herself during restructure, individuals may look into personal and social matters. Mills (2010) raised the issue of potential conflict between an individual’s private troubles and public issues in a given society’s social setting. He argued that, “a trouble is a private matter: values cherished by an individual are felt by him to be threatened” (p.7), whereas “an issue is a public matter: some value cherished by publics is felt to be threatened” (p.7). The complexity of individual identity results from the fact that, “people are required to take on various corporate personas. These personas are likely to differ from the ones that they adopt in other parts of their lives and, indeed, many come into tension with them” (Watson 2008, p.122). The complexity increases because there are “also personas which the individual is required to adapt and change as global, societal and organizational circumstances change” (Watson 2008, p.122).

The issue of job security in the construction of individual identity also plays a significant role. Volkwein and Zhou (2003) conducted a quantitative survey of administrative staff job satisfaction with 1200 managers at 120 public and private universities in the U.S. Their result confirmed the impact of personal problems, health

problems and financial problems which created negative perceptions by individuals of their workplace and affected their overall job satisfaction. Another two critical factors that directly affected individuals' satisfaction and their overall satisfaction were job insecurity and interpersonal conflict at work. Negative emotions at work have a dampening effect on workplace morale. The overall effect of job insecurity is likely to impact on others beyond existing workgroups.

Thus, Volkwein and Zhou (2003, p.167) argue that it is important to be aware that "improvements in the immediate work environment will produce the greatest impact on managerial morale, productivity, and retention". Their study also found that the most interesting, but often overlooked, key element attracting administrators to the job was "the intrinsic aspects of work [which were considered] (are) more important than the others" (p.151). It was not "the extrinsic rewards" (p.168), such as high remuneration, that were considered to compensate them for a poor job environment. Hence it is crucial for senior management to "respond to the intrinsic needs of their managers and create opportunities for them to be creative, to exercise their initiative, and to match their talents appropriately to job responsibilities" (p.168). Their study also encouraged actions, saying that, "to enhance administrative worklife might include improved communications, recognition for excellence, career mentoring, and professional development opportunities" (p.168).

Together with other stresses due to the restructure process, job security and the existing organisational culture instil tremendous extra pressure on the individual's ability to socialise at work and/or in their personal life. Self-identity is presented as encompassing and expressing the individual's experience, world-views, constructed meaning, values and other things that are significant to the individual. Although Gergen's findings were published in 1971, they are still relevant today as "the findings showed that the closer the subject's self-descriptions were to the characteristics of a given role, the greater the preference for the role" (p.78). Factors such as educational background (Bachelor, Master's or PhD) of administrative staff, and greater involvement of professional staff in key decision makings also play a crucial role in the construction of self-identity. As Whetten and Godfrey (1998) point out, the multiple identities that one takes on in different situations and practices are the centrality of identity of oneself or the group. These multiple identities are all part of the individual, and in totality represent a person.

That is, the individual may choose to circulate among different identities subject to the situation. It is in this circumstance that the individual does not have one true identity but rather several identities.

Self-identity is a combination of work and home since individuals need to deal with their personal identities as at home and as at work (Watson 2008). Watson raised the concern of excessive romanticisation of “what goes on in people’s minds at the expense of attention to the part that is played by the social structures, cultures and discourses within which the individual is located” (2008, p.122). These concerns, also raised by others, such as Alvesson (2010), Reissner (2010) and Watson (2008), clearly show that it is equally important to have a deep understanding of how individuals construct meanings at home as at work, especially during restructure. I take the position that it is necessary to fill the current knowledge gap in detail to gain a better understanding of self-identity in order to achieve greater organisational performance and improve management skills during restructure. This will underpin the groundwork needed to reduce some of the negative sentiment from staff at a time of restructuring. However, the psychological issues involved are beyond the scope of this study.

In a review of organisational studies literature that focused on self-identity, Alvesson (2010) proposed a scheme for the construction of self-identity with the aim of creating a different direction for identity studies. He suggested seven typologies which may be utilised to identify genuine self-identity formation of individuals in different situations: self-doubter, struggler, surfer, storyteller, strategist, stencil and soldier. His scheme draws on political theory; critical management studies; poststructuralism and discourse analysis; narrative theory, socialisation, career theory and conflict theory; Foucauldian power theory and institutional theory; and social identity theory. In a discussion of these typologies, Alvesson demonstrates the process of the conceptualisation and the construction of self-identity of the individual. He is critical of the role and the influence of investigators in identity studies who attempted to present the self of participating individuals in self-identity formation. By declaring that “identity is a difficult theme to study and it can easily involve everything and nothing” (p.212), Alvesson emphasises that self-identity requires a responsive and thoughtful hermeneutic reading of



participants' text. He calls for "the use of carefully thought through images and to support reflexive studies where the researcher keeps more than one image in mind and is prepared to challenge his/her conceptualizations and line of inquiry" (p.212).

With all the decisions or experiences that the individual has to experience in order to make sense of the specific process that individuals go through, the expectation and the relationship of the individual with the specific process can never be predictable. As Gergen (1991) stated in *The Saturated Self*, "one's identity is continuously emergent, re-formed, and redirected as one moves through the sea of ever-changing relationships" (p.139). Every individual remembers the scars from their experience. These scars may heal but they constitute part of the individual's attitude towards his or her colleagues and the organisation where he or she works. These memories also affect the individual's interpretation of events or messages that have been communicated to him or her by others.

Once again, in order to have a good understanding of the *why*, *what* and *how* of the experience by MFAS of the process of organisational and functional change, it is crucial to avoid using simple unitary representations of the construction of self-identity of MFAS. This is because reality is a social product of human interaction and creativity (Patton 1980) such that every working day is a different day. As mentioned in previous sections, a constructionist conceptualisation is needed in this study to allow a multiplicity of individuals' experiences or points of view or events to emerge. Particularly, both identity formation and the construction of meanings are multifaceted and complex at individual, group and organisational levels (Whetten & Godfrey 1998).

## **Chapter Summary**

The point of this chapter has been to provide a relevant literature for this study. The first section discussed the philosophical underpinnings of this research. The second section reviewed the literature with reference to the two themes of the study: change in HE, and the construction of the identity of MFAS during restructure. Given that these themes are common issues in the HE sector, it was imperative to include as broadly relevant a literature as possible. The lack of research on self-identity formation in a process-

specific perspective and of a practical approach to managing human resources to address the issue of improving organisational performance were also noted.

In reviewing the relevant literature for this thesis, it became clear that very little research has been done on the working life of MFAS, despite the research on organisational restructure and university staff workload. The research that has been carried out on administrative staff has focused on the costing of administration resources in terms of efficiency. There has been little research published on the construction of identity of MFAS especially during restructure. The idea that universities are becoming multiple stakeholders' corporations with a complex and multidimensional workforce is significant for this study. The demand from multiple stakeholders at work and the construction of employee identity, together with a theoretical approach of social constructivism, underpin this study with the aim of empowering the participants through the research process.

There is a void in the literature on the HE workforce. It seemed that the MFAS is a group of "firing-line managers" (Rosser 2000, p.319) who would be the first to go under restructure despite being "the unsung professionals of the academy" (Rosser 2000, p.5). This chapter reviewed the literature on issues that MFAS might face during their working lives. The review looked at these factors in relation to the traditional organisational structure of universities, the influence of globalisation and increasing government demands for accountability due to financial constraints. It was found that many of the factors concerning the working lives of MFAS were linked to socially and culturally constructed norms. The common assumption that administrative staff are less educated because they are not hired as academics is a socially constructed one. Also, by being always present and available as well as being obedient, staff often collude with this assumption.

These comments concern issues of global competition for talented employees, Australia's ageing workforce, job satisfaction, intention to leave, morale at work, ambivalence of respective functions of academics and administrative staff, and misconceptions of the value of MFAS. It is clear from this research that an in-depth understanding of the working lives of MFAS and the construction of the identities of MFAS under restructure offers an opportunity to improve recruitment practices and

improve the retention rate of committed, talented staff and so achieve better organisational performance.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

#### Introduction

This chapter discusses the research method adopted in the study. As I reflected upon my previous studies in engineering, applied science and business administration, my initial inclination was to conduct a quantitative study using a questionnaire-based method. As I read the organisational studies and human resource management literature, it became apparent to me that a qualitative approach might be more appropriate. My initial thoughts of a research method based on a structured quantitative survey were diverted by a conversation with the late Professor Alison Lee in Spring 2007. Professor Lee challenged my construction of the research questions, asking, “What do you want to find out, why do you want to find it and how do you find the answer?” Her questions caused me to re-consider the most appropriate way to investigate the research topic:

*What impacts are the major organisational changes having on the working lives of MFAS and on the way they see themselves as part of the university?*

The qualitative approach allows the researcher to be involved loosely with the concept of study and permits the study of phenomena in their context. A qualitative approach is used to collect rich data and do so in-depth. It is concerned with how individuals understand their social and personal world and the meanings they derive from their experience. Qualitative research can be carried out using a variety of methods, including in-depth interview, case study, life histories, focus groups and others more (Merriam 1988; Neuman 1997). Given the research seeks to interpret the impact of major organisational restructure on the working lives and identities of MFAS, an interpretative qualitative approach case study with ethnography was adopted (Alvesson 2003; Reed-Danahay 1997). I therefore decided to conduct a qualitative study, using self-ethnography and qualitative interviewing to obtain empirical data. This qualitative method was adopted to explore, understand and theorise the working lives of MFAS under major organisational restructuring; generate new knowledge about how they construct meaning from their day-to-day work when faced with restructure; uncover the meaning of being MFFAS; discover what support MFAS have to deal with day-to-day pressure and stress during major organisational restructure; highlight those critical

supports or facilities that can help individuals to cope with changes; and in doing so aim to contribute towards the retention of talented professional staff under restructure.

With this in mind, the initial part of this chapter considers important reasons that underpin the principles and the application of qualitative and self-ethnographic research to demonstrate the appropriateness of this approach. This is followed by a discussion on forming a reference group, selecting case study sites and choosing participants. A detailed description of how the research was conducted and the data collected analysed is provided to help readers become better informed and understand the significance and the value of the findings. Finally, ethics issues, expected findings and limitations are discussed.

## **Research Questions and Qualitative Research Methodology**

To answer the general research question – *What impacts are the major organisational changes having on the working lives of MFAS and on the way they see themselves as part of the university?* – I developed the following three research questions that seek to explore and interpret the working lives of MFAS to understand the construction and perception of their realities in Australian universities.

1. a) *What types of major organisational restructuring are MFAS experiencing?*  
b) *What is the nature of their day-to-day experiences in the climate of change?*
2. *How do MFAS resolve the demands of key stakeholders and those of their work environment?*
3. *How do MFAS perceive their profession and construct meaning?*

### *Self-ethnography research*

I have had over ten years' experience as an MFAS to reflect on as I tried to make sense of the working lives and identities of MFAS under major organisational restructuring in the study. As I read publicly available reports on organisational restructure in HE, observed the retrenchment of professional staff and academics and discussed their working lives and their identities with various MFAS, I became aware that professional staff have limited voices in organisational restructuring, especially mid-level

professional staff who are viewed as “firing-line managers” (Rosser 2000, p.319) that “have the responsibility to monitor and regulate policies and procedures but rarely have the authority to change, adjust or develop the regulations they enforce” (p.319). In fact, they are usually the first group to go under restructure. “Organisational autoethnographies can provide first-hand counts of taboo topics such as sexual harassment and bullying, motherhood at work, various moral dilemmas and highly charged emotional situations in the workplace. There are situations that otherwise remain shrouded in secrecy, or are considered ‘untouchable’ by serious organisational researchers” (Boyle & Parry 2007, p.189). Self-ethnography is a way of studying the meaning of culture when the researcher is an active participant in the cultural setting. The implementation of self-ethnography in this study is grounded in Alvesson (2003):

A self-ethnography is a study and a text in which the researcher-author describes a cultural setting to which s/he has a ‘natural access’, is an active participant, more or less on equal terms with other participants. (p.174)

The benefits of using self-ethnography were clearly stated by Alvesson (2003):

Self-ethnography may facilitate the production of rich empirical accounts... is modestly engaged in scanning one’s lived reality for research options... runs into events making a good account possible, providing a feeling for what goes on and facilitating productive interrelations...

Self-ethnography may develop reflexivity in relation to one’s own organisational practices, thus combining theory and practice, and transcend the border between doing research and being an organizational member in other capacities. (p.189)

The in-depth interviews and observer participation allowed me to step back and see others’ real experience and a chance to reflect on “what was going on around oneself rather than putting oneself and one’s experience in the center” (Alvesson 2003, p.175). The method provided me the opportunity to catch a glimpse of unrecognised or unnoticed actions. It allowed me to understand how each individual interpreted or responded to their own environment. Observer participation adds an element of depth, demanding the researcher’s attention to detail and being able to reflect on his or her understandings and assumptions in the study. Being an insider, I have similar

experience, being immersed in different tribes but part of the culture and sharing part of the jargon.

### *Case studies*

Case studies help extend our understanding of multiple realities of the world that are projected by individual interaction and perception (Merriam 1988, p.8, p.17). The case study is one of the most suitable methodologies for further understanding issues so as to improve practice (Merriam 1998, p.8). Merriam (1998) added that by concentrating on a single phenomenon or entity (the case), the researcher aims to uncover the interaction of significant factors characteristic of the phenomenon. The investigation of how MFAS carry out their roles in a changing environment required an in-depth understanding. It was important to comprehend the complexity of how an individual makes sense of their identity and the culture in their working lives.

Case studies allow the researcher to understand a real-life situation as truthfully and totally as possible from the actors' perspective. Firstly, case study research can assist in the construction of knowledge of different perspectives of education (Merriam 1998, p.8). Secondly, case studies provide a complete description and intensive analysis of a particular phenomenon (Merriam 1988, p.21). Furthermore, because of extensive description and analysis of development typical of case studies, they help to gain a deeper understanding of the realities and of the meaning for those who are involved in the study (Merriam 1988). More importantly, case studies can produce evidence that may be used as a foundation for other studies of the same problem. The case study then is not a specific technique; rather, it is a way of organising social data so as to preserve the unitary character of the social object being studied (Goode & Hatt 1952, p.331 in Punch 2004, p.150).

The case study method is distinguishable from other methods because it usually involves a small sample (Yin 2003). Case studies can be designed using a single site or multiple sites (Yin 2003, chapter 2). The choice of either the single or multiple case study design is dependent on the research questions (Yin 2003, chapter 2). The single case study method is deemed appropriate when the case represents an extreme case, a unique case or a critical case (Yin 2003, p.40). In contrast, the multiple case study approach to research is based on the concept of the 'multiple experiment' to either

predict similar results or contrasting results (Yin 2003, p.47). There are many major restructures taking place in the Australian HE sector. However, it is considered important that no single university can be identified as a critical case, and that theory will be better built by considering more than one institution and so the current study adopts a multiple case approach.

#### *Rationale for methods*

The methods that I chose to collect the data were qualitative interviewing, self-ethnography, field notes and critical reflective journal writing. These methods were chosen as the most suitable and appropriate way to address the goal of the study, an ethnographic interpretation of the impact of major organisational restructure on the working lives and identities of MFAS (Alvesson 2003; Reed-Danahay 1997). Patton (1980) suggests that qualitative methods offer broader and more holistic perspectives that allow a closer involvement of the researcher with the phenomenon of study. The qualitative method of inquiry encourages the reader as well as the researcher to get a better understanding of ‘the causal relationship between arbitrarily chosen variables ... to those individuals whose social worlds they are meant to represent’ (Bryman 1984, p.79) in a study. Self-ethnography allowed me, a researcher with the dual role of researcher and of participant, to conduct the study in a familiar cultural setting, the same setting as experienced by the study participants, thus having a similar way of constructing meanings and experience as other participants (Alvesson 2003).

To investigate the impact of organisational change on the working lives and identity of MFAS, one possible way is to use the richness and diversity of data to build theory, referred to as a ‘grounded theory approach’ by Charmaz (2006, p.22) who states that, “grounded theory ethnographers study what is happening in the setting and make a *conceptual* rendering of these action”. The benefits of choosing grounded theory in analysing the data are being able to:

- 1) compare data with data from the beginning of the research, not after all the data are collect;
- 2) compare data with emerging categories; and
- 3) demonstrate relations between concepts and categories.



Charmaz (2006) argues that this method helps ethnographers overcome “1) accusations of uncritically adopting research participants’ views, 2) lengthy unfocused forays into the field settings, 3) superficial, random data collection, and 4) reliance on stock disciplinary categories”(p.23), and that grounded theory can expedite ethnographers’ delving into problematic topics that emerge in the field.

*Positioning and repositioning as researcher and self-ethnographer*

The way we conduct research is largely affected by how we perceive our roles in a studied community and so does self-ethnographic research (Alvesson 2003; Reed-Danahay 1997). As reflected in my journal below, being a self-ethnographic researcher, the process of questioning one’s “basic ideas and assumptions” (Alvesson 2003, p.189), the on-going thinking and re-thinking of the methodology, and the data analysis of communicated and uncommunicated information helped me to avoid staying native (Alvesson 2003; Reed-Danahay 1997).

*I found myself reviewing my philosophical assumptions expressed in the previous chapter as I re-read it. I positioned and repositioned myself as a researcher in the study. I started to question my thinking, my ideas, my personal assumptions and the reasons for doing the study. (Researcher’s reflections)*

My journey as an MFAS undertaking this study was among the most privileged learning opportunities I have experienced. I attributed this to the trust that each participant had in me. In keeping with the principles of self-ethnography research, my pseudo-subjective world view was part of the study throughout. As one of the actors, my personal experience and knowledge of the discourse of MFAS were also valuable.

Realities exist as a social product of human interaction and creativity (Patton 1980). As a fact of life, no working lives are static, and neither are those of university administrators. To understand the *why*, *what* and *how* of university administrators’ experience of organisational and functional change, it was crucial to avoid using simple unitary representations of any assumed conflicts. Instead, a conceptualisation of several individuals’ experience or point of view or events was more suitable for this study.

### *Reference group*

Acting as a preliminary focus group for the initial conceptual development of the research, a reference group composed of three academics and two administrators, based in three different universities, who have extensive experience in the Australian HE sector, provided insightful information and advice of the intended study. The interviews with the reference group yielded rich and descriptive comments on the design of the study. Interestingly, among the reference group, academics emphasised the importance of addressing theoretical focus in identifying the gap in the literature whereas administrators' comment were on operational issues such as identification of participants to the study. It was agreed that it is an area of obvious relevance and has a potential benefit to those who work in higher education. More importantly it was observed that there appears to be a significant difference in terms of staff benefit between academics and administrators below the senior management level in universities. In summary, the group agreed that in recent years an overemphasis on multilateral funding resources has strongly affected the managerial approach in universities.

The most likely forces driving the reform of HE are changing desires of the business sector, demands of students, changes in technology, currently employed university staff and increasingly competitive government funding. The changes include organisational culture, job structure and individual perceptions of the role relationship between academics and administrative managers. The comment that many great academics were not good administrators was also made. The perception that only academic staff could make good decisions and that administrative staff were there only to implement them was widely held. More importantly, there was a significant difference in staff benefits between academics and administrators below the senior management level, which implied that academics were more important to the university below the senior management level. An interviewee emphasised that there was a lack of understanding by academics of the work of administrative staff. It was also said that there was a change in younger academics who seemed to be more inclined to work with administrators without any barriers and with mutual respect.

### *Triangulation*

Triangulation of data from multiple sources and collected using different methods has been used to clarify the self-identity formation of MFAS and verify the replicability of the researcher's interpretations of participants' interviews (Lincoln & Guba 1985; Merriam 1988; Denzin & Lincoln 2000). Readers of this study will be able to determine whether or not the combination of research questions, data collection methods and analysis strategies bring insights into their own situations. It is aimed to support the findings and to provide validation of the emerging discussion of the impacts of major organisational restructure on MFAS. The data collection methods used made it possible to triangulate the data collected:

- 1) Qualitative interviewing with extensive field notes;
- 2) Keeping of a researcher's reflective journal;
- 3) Having participants confirm the veracity of researcher's interpretation of the participant's interview data; and
- 4) Collecting organisational documents and archival records.

### *Selection of case sites and sample*

The first stage of the study was what Yin (2003) called the exploratory stage in which the case sites were identified: University A (a 'Unitech' in the terms of Marginson & Considine 2000, p.190, Table 7.2) and University B (a 'New University' in the terms of Marginson & Considine 2000, p.190, Table 7.2), both are metropolitan Sydney, in New South Wales, Australia. One of these is currently undergoing a third administrative restructuring due to an academic restructure. The other has also undergone restructuring. The reasons for choosing University A (Unitech) and University B (New University) were, first, ease of access geographically (and thus financially) terms, and second, the consideration that the Unitech and new universities being less "dependent on autonomous academic cultures (Marginson & Considine 2000, p.237). This second consideration suggest that research of this nature and on these particular types of institutions is likely to have greater impact than similar research aimed at older, more firmly established, institutions. This point is further considered in Chapter 2 under the heading of Identity of mid-level faculty-based administrative staff under restructure sector. The population for this study are mid-level administrative staff who are

employed at level 6 to level 10 at the case sites. Purposive sampling, a non-probabilistic method (Merriam 1988, p.47), was used to choose the participants. The researcher “began with the assumption that context is critical” (Lincoln & Guba 1985, p.200) and purposely selected a sample who provided a rich and detailed source for data collection. Purposive sampling is to assure that several points of view are heard (Neuman 1997, p.206). The following four points summarise the criteria for the selection of participants:

- 1) Experience of the phenomena;
- 2) Knowledge of the phenomena;
- 3) Ability to communicate the phenomena precisely; and
- 4) Accessibility to the researcher.

Participants who were interviewed were also asked to suggest other mid-level administrative staff. This was intended to apply a purposive snowballing sampling technique to identify participants who might have been overlooked in the initial selection (Denscombe 2007, pp.17-18).

The sample consisted of 20 mid-level administrators from two Australian universities. The intention of the researcher was to interview two mid-level administrators at each level; however, availability of participants was subject to various factors, such as time constraints, prior commitments, and limited financial resources for the study. Participants from Uni A and Uni B were either interviewed in the participants’ office, the interviewer’s office or at an off-site location, whichever the participant felt comfortable with. Each interview last for one to two hours and it was carried out in English. Table 3.1 shows the number and details of interviews planned per institution.

**Table 3.1: Interview schedule**

<b>Location of Institution</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>HEWS</b>	<b>Interviews per Level (No.)</b>	<b>Time per Interview (Hour)</b>
New South Wales	University A	6-10	2	1 – 2
New South Wales	University B	6-10	2	1 – 2
Total	2		20	20 – 40

In summary, the study was carried out in three stages. The first stage was what Yin (2003) called the exploratory stage in which I identified the case sites. The second stage

was a combination of the exploratory and explanatory (Yin 2003). The focus was on exploring what types of restructure mid-level administrators are experiencing and what is the nature of their day-to-day experience, and the ways in which mid-level administrators satisfy various key stakeholders, as well as to contextualise their way of constructing meaning. This phase was concerned with interpreting and analysing the data from the Data collection section below. The third and final stage was focused on the conceptualisation of a number of principles, which provided guidelines and knowledge for policy makers who initiate future changes in universities.

### *Data collection*

The data was gathered from documentation, archival records, interviews with selected participants, field notes, the researcher's reflective journal and physical artefacts from observation in the workplace. This variety of data was collected to ensure that it addressed the three research questions. First, the researcher established what needed to be achieved and what needed to be focused on by referring to the exploratory stage. "Documents are a rich source of data for social science and it is common to collect documentary data in conjunction with other research methods" (Punch 2004, p.190). This data formed a foundation for the interviews and self-ethnography. Any document related to mid-level university administrators was collected especially in the light of functional, organisational and structural change. The documents fall into three main categories:

- 1) Documents internal to a given faculty;
- 2) Documents internal to the university concentrating on the entire university; and
- 3) Documents in the public domain concerning the HE sector.

The documents ranged from 1970 to 2012. Documents internal to a given faculty included memorandums, both paper and electronic, minutes of meetings, reports and policy documents. The topics of faculty documents covered change of administration and its roles. Internal university documents concerning the whole of the university comprised memorandums, both hard copy and electronic, administrative notes, organisational charts, strategic plans and the university handbook. The university-wide documents provided information on the impact of restructure on university administrators' working lives. Finally, documents in the public domain that were

relevant to university administrators in the HE sector included press clippings, university publications, website information and speakers' notes from relevant public forum on HE. Both the NTEU and the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) were to be the starting points for data sources.

The second stage comprised in-depth interviews and observer participation (self-ethnography) intended to find out how individuals constructed meaning and how they saw themselves in the restructuring. Interviews offer several benefits to case study research. They enable the researcher to gather large amounts of in-depth and rich information of the phenomenon under study. They also provide an opportunity for the researcher to clarify any ambiguous answers to the interview questions (Neuman 1997; Yin 2003). The three commonly known interviewing approaches are 1) highly structured, 2) semi-structured, and 3) unstructured interviews (Merriam 1998). The unstructured interview was chosen for this study because of its flexibility in asking questions that allowed participants to express their feelings and points of view (Merriam 1988). During the interview, I began with broad questions, such as, "*Can you tell me how you feel/felt when you hear/became aware of the restructure?*" As each interview progressed, I asked for clarification of certain points, such as, "*Can you tell me what you mean by different role/different meanings?*" Once themes began to emerge in the interviews, I validated them in subsequent interviews.

The data collected in self-ethnography included writing a journal of reflections, making field notes, providing descriptions of the interviewing process, and the behaviours of interviewees. The descriptions of the interviewing process described who was present at the interview, what happened and how each participant responded to interview questions (Angrosino & Mays de Perez 2000).

Since the nature of the interview questions was open-ended, it was not possible to devise all the questions beforehand. The interaction between the researcher and the participants was subtly redirected by the researcher if it strayed too far off the track of the research study (Burns 2000). Interviews were meant to help the researcher to discover and portray the multiple points of view of the interviewees (Stake 1995) of their working lives during restructuring of this study. A major advantage of conducting

interviews was its adaptability since it allowed the researcher to follow up ideas, investigate feelings and motives, and to develop and clarify a response.

According to Alvesson (2003), the term ‘observer participant’ is more appropriate than ‘participant observation’ when conducting self-ethnography where the researcher has natural access to the site and works or has worked in the same cultural setting as the interviewees under study. Observation therefore required first-hand involvement in the field of study. It required the researcher to systematically record events, behaviour and the social setting throughout the duration of the study (Bryman 1984; Patton 1980). In this study, the researcher kept a reflective journal throughout the study to observe her feelings and thinking processes during the study. All data collected in the observational phase was captured in the form of field notes to reduce the chance of the researcher ‘going native’ and accepting any participant view as presented (Denscombe 2007, pp.217-218).

The field notes were recorded according to Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater (2011): date, time and place of observation; specific facts, details of what happens at the site; sensory impressions: sights, sounds, textures, smells; personal responses to the fact of recording field notes; specific words, phrases, summaries of conversations and insider language; questions about people or behaviours at the site for future investigation.

#### *Qualitative interviewing and the self-ethnographer*

I made a conscious decision to be reflective in order to maintain an open mind while researching the topic. Being a self-ethnographer, to avoid being naïve I recorded in a reflective journal my personal feelings and thinking about different events in my daily working life and my thoughts concerning the study (Alvesson 2003; Ellis & Bochner 2000).

In the first interview, I was nervous and hesitant. This was due to my dual roles as a researcher and an MFAS. I found myself wanting to ‘join in’ the conversation instead of being the researcher. I had to consciously control myself to not take on the role of an MFAS. As I conducted more interviews and started writing my reflective journal, I became more comfortable and had less of a tendency to ‘join in’ the conversation. Participants gave the impression of feeling comfortable with my interview style and my questions throughout the interview process. Many were just happy to have a break from

their day-to-day routine and share their stories with me. Some were very willing to reflect on their working lives and to share their opinions with me.

I maintained the anonymity of the study participants and at no point did I reveal their identities. I was aware of the fact that what I was researching was sensitive. At the same time, although being an MFAS myself, I did not assume I know everything of the study participants. In my day-to-day working life, there are times when I have to deal with some of the study participants (who are outside my faculty in University A) but I maintained my outsider status when I concluded the interview session and went back to my normal day job. According to Emerson and Pollner (2001, p.241), the researcher has the choice of deciding what is his or her role in the research being conducted. I found this an emotionally draining decision to make. My particular choice was not an easy one to make but it was a conscious choice. I found myself drawn into the working lives and the lived experience of the study participants. I was aware of the fact that my experience of an on-going organisational restructure in my workplace might cloud my thinking so it was important to keep a reflective journal.

#### *Data analysis*

A keen eye, receptive mind, discerning ear and steady head bring us close to the studied phenomena and are more important than developing methodological tools. (Charmaz & Mitchell 2001, p.161)

The qualitative data analysis was ongoing during the process of data collection to form tentative interpretations of the data gathered from the mid-level administrators. As I collected data, I analysed, reviewed and reflected on the data, informed by my knowledge of organisational theory. I cross-referenced the data to my field notes and my reflective journal. I put aside material that made no sense to me at the time so that I could go back and revisit it later. I continued to read published documents related to HE organisational restructuring until I produced the final draft of this thesis.

The data analysis comprised two main stages. Stage one was the preparatory stage during which the data collected in the interviews and during observations were organised. A data management system was set up to record the data collected, together with a brief description of it. Stage two focused on words, phrases and expressions that



participants used in the interviews and during observations, followed by developing initial coding categories. All transcripts were imported into Nvivo 8.0 for categorisation by grouping phrases and meanings under each research question. The transcripts were then re-read and regrouped within each research question. Given that a grounded theory approach was used, the coding categories drew on the literature review during data analysis. Initial categories were compared to each other and grouped together into higher order categories with a number of iterations.

It was also critical the way in which I conducted each interview and how I subsequently listened and re-listened to the recordings. Miles and Huberman (1984 in Punch 2004) suggested an interactive model for the data analysis in case studies. The model comprises data display, data reduction and conclusions, with cycles of drawing on and verifying the data cumulatively. The current study adopted the systematic analysis of collected data using grounded approaches (Glaser & Strauss 1967) and framework analysis (Ritchie, Spencer & O'Connor 2003). Attention was paid to every recorded action and its related dialogue when examining the meaning of each category. During the analysis, the data was constantly compared with relevant theoretical questions, using coding. It was expected that various themes emerged from the data analysis to help categorise and make sense of the data. Some common themes emerged but distinct themes also, strongly related to the research questions.

After each of the 20 interviews, field notes were developed into full descriptions as soon as possible to ensure their accuracy, as this would be useful in the data analysis. All interviews were audio-recorded and then transcribed. When transcribing the interviews, I noted the way in which each participant communicated, including grammatical errors, pauses, tone of voice (excitement or high pitch) and emphasis on particular words. A complete description of my feelings and ideas during the interview process was also included. In the grouping process, each code started with the number 1 to separate it from a second grouping, and so on. I further categorised the data into different themes until data saturation was reached and no new code was found in interview and observation.

## **Analytical Reflectivity**

With a background in science, engineering and business administration, I chose grounded theory and framework analysis as the basis for data analysis. Moreover, being one of the MFAS, a narrative-type of approach might have been inappropriate on account of my insider-outsider role when collecting and analysing the data and because of the potential subjectivity of my worldview. Being familiar with the cultural setting of the study may have biased my thinking, so I used my eyes to observe and my ears to listen to anything that was pushed under the surface by the study participants. Understandably, the view a person projects to the outside world is intended as a protective shield designed to protect them. The inside of an individual, however, is likely to be different from the outside and thus far more intriguing.

As one of the MFAS underwent organisational restructure while I was conducting the research, I consciously kept a journal to record my observations and impressions in the interview and also my personal experience of the restructure. The journal was used as a tool to keep track of how I made sense of the participants' experience, rethinking the interview process when analysing the data and writing up the results.

## **Ethical Dimensions**

As both the researcher and one of the MFAS, I was aware of the need to consider the ethical issues involved in the interview. I made a considerable effort to be as transparent and open as possible. To this end I

- 1) Wrote a short document outlining the intention of the study, my research aims, my procedures for gathering information from participants, and my provisions for secure handling of this information;
- 2) Wrote a consent form that recorded that the participant had agreed to participate, consented to audio-recording if there was any, and had been provided information in writing about their rights as a participant;
- 3) Encouraged participants to contact me if they needed additional clarification or information;

- 4) Created a safe and secure environment for the storage of the data;
- 5) Ensured all information was kept strictly confidential; and
- 6) Sent a formal letter or an email of thanks to each participant after each session.

Often it is at the stages of gathering and disseminating research findings that ethical dilemmas may occur and in which ethical decisions have to be made (Merriam 1988). I have addressed the following issues related to ethical and potential political considerations of the research design. Firstly, I understand that in the course of the study I may gain knowledge of confidential information about participants, some of whom may be my colleagues. I have refrained from talking about any information I gained from this study whenever the topic of restructuring came up in conversation. When I have been asked to comment, I have clearly stated my position and declined to disclose details of the study. Secondly, as a researcher, I have the role of investigator but I also have social relations with my colleagues. The need for anonymity is critical because I am reporting the perceptions, values, beliefs and circumstances of MFAS who have experienced or are experiencing restructuring. I understand that there is no absolute anonymity in research, thus, I have communicated with participants regarding the risks that may be involved. More importantly, I have been aware that the existence of occupying multiple roles and realities, and the interference this may cause, may unintentionally affect my interpretation of the data.

Clearly, conducting interviews is not always easy, especially when the interviewee knows the interviewer. Sometimes the researcher may find it hard to restrain himself or herself from adding his or her own comments. Occasionally, the researcher may inadvertently lead the interviewees in a particular direction in the interview. From an ethical point of view, it is important to understand that collegial relationships are fragile and may be further strained by the interview process. For this reason, I continue to educate myself, reflect as much as possible, and be explicit in collecting and analysing the data and at all times carefully consider the potential impact of the study on the participants. I have made every effort to conduct this research in a sensitive manner with objectivity, honesty and integrity.

Approval from the Human Resource Ethics Committee at the University of Technology, Sydney was gained, in accordance with University rules governing such research. All

transcribed materials are stored in a locked cabinet and with the supervisor on behalf the university. Data is to be kept for a period of seven years before being shredded and disposed of by approved means (University of Technology, Sydney 2012).

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter has argued that qualitative interviewing and the self-ethnography approach were adopted appropriately in the study. Given I am one of the MFAS and facing a major organisational restructuring currently, I described and explained the way in which I conducted the data collection to address the issues of bias and objectivity. I dealt with these issues by cross-referencing the data to field notes and the reflective journal in which I recorded my personal feelings and questioned my thinking by maintaining closeness with participants. Being an observer-participant had positive and negative effects on the study. I had to be as transparent and open as possible without betraying the confidentiality guaranteed the participants while not becoming ‘naive’ in the conduct of self-ethnographic research (Alvesson 2003; Reed-Danahay 1997). However, the positive effect of being an insider far outweighed any negative ones. I have presented how I analysed the data as a means of developing a comprehensive understanding of the impacts of organisational restructuring on MFAS in their day-to-day working lives and on their identities.

In the following chapters, I outline the findings and their discussions of the three research questions that aimed to explore the working lives and identities of MFAS under organisational restructuring:

1. *a) What types of major organisational restructuring are MFAS experiencing?*  
*b) What is the nature of their day-to-day experiences in the climate of change?*
2. *How do MFAS resolve the demands of key stakeholders and those of the working environment?*
3. *How do MFAS perceive their profession and construct meaning?*

## **Chapter 4**

### **Working Environment of MFAS during Organisational Restructuring**

Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning.

Albert Einstein

The previous chapter described the methodology and the data analysis employed in this study. A series of qualitative interviews were conducted with 20 research participants, all experienced MFAS, from July 2009 to November 2009 during a time of change in two universities in Australia. The major organisational restructures that participants experienced were the reorganisation of a faculty, the amalgamation of faculties, the centralisation and decentralisation of student services and technical support, and the relocation to different campuses. However, due to the accessibility of MFAS in University B, participants from University B did not report the amalgamation of faculties, and the centralisation and decentralisation of student services and technical support. The interviews were designed to gather information on issues and situations concerning the working lives of MFAS in major organisational restructures. The data was analysed according to the grounded theory method and framework as mentioned in Chapter 3. All transcripts were imported into Nvivo 8.0 for categorisation by grouping phrases and meanings under each research question. The transcripts were then re-read and regrouped within each question. Extra attention was focused on coding and memoing during data analysis with a number of reiterations as suggested by grounded theory. Finally, the data were reorganised into larger categories for discussion.

The Keynote speaker, David Murray, Chairman of the Future Fund and former CEO of the Commonwealth Bank, noted that universities should concentrate on the transfer of knowledge from employers to universities (B-HERT 2007), therefore, it is important to address real-life problems and issues to broaden and improve the understanding of professional practice. The main research question in this study was “*What impacts are the major organisational changes having on the working lives of MFAS and on the way*

*that they see themselves as part of the university?”* Three more detailed research questions designed to answer the general research question were:

**Research Question 1 (Interview Questions 1-4, see Chapter 4):**

*1a) What types of major organisational restructuring are MFAS experiencing?*

*1b) What is the nature of their day-to-day experiences in the climate of change?*

**Research Question 2 (Interview Questions 5-8, see Chapter 5):**

*How do MFAS resolve the demands of key stakeholders, students, academics, other administrative staff and the public, in the current changing work environment?*

**Research Question 3 (Interview Questions 9-14, see Chapter 6):**

*How do MFAS perceive their profession and construct meaning?*

## **Presentation of Findings**

The aim of this study is to examine the lived experiences of a group of MFAS during restructure. As a researcher myself and as an MFAS at the same time, it is of importance to minimise academic interpretation to let readers walk-through the participants' narratives to form their own opinions and, because of this, the structure of reporting of results, discussion and conclusions is divided into two parts. The first part reports the findings of the interviews in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 pertaining to each research question. It is my intention for these three chapters to be read as personal chapters that report the results of a series of qualitative interviews with limited interference of academic interpretation. The second part discusses the findings in linking to relevant theories and presents the conclusions of the study in Chapter 7.

The findings presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 offer an in-depth view of the constraints and tensions in constructing meanings from the day-to-day working lives of MFAS during restructure. It is not intended to be a straightforward report of the working lives of MFAS and their identities under major organisational restructure; instead it is aimed at presenting the findings from several viewpoints. The chapters examine the constraints and tensions experienced in dealing with their fear of losing their job and their emotional journey in the construction of individual identity during restructure. The presentation of these constraints and tensions provided an insight into how MFAS

negotiated their working lives, their dedication to their job and their self-construction as an individual during restructuring. Each of the MFAS had a unique experience coping with restructure at work as MFAS and as individual. All direct quotations from participants will be presented in italics with reference to their respective universities. Furthermore, any unattributed quotations and case where the university is not specified in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 should be read as statements indicative of similar statements made by participants and from both universities.

Further, as mentioned in the ethics application for this research, and also in Chapter 3, there is a certain risk that participants to this research might be identifiable, particularly to people who know them personally, by the statements they have made in interviews. While the inclusion of quotations from interviews is desirable for the additional authenticity it adds to this research, this desirability must be balanced with the critical importance of maintaining participant privacy. Quotations from interviews are therefore included herein wherever it is appropriate, and where it is possible to do so without any risk of rendering participants identifiable. In some sections, participants' statements are excluded, paraphrased or otherwise obfuscated so as to ensure their anonymity.

One of the guiding principles in conducting self-ethnography is that a researcher needs to avoid being self-glorifying in self-reflexivity (Swan 2008). Transparency is the key in self-ethnography in methodology, analysis and interpretation of data, reflexivity and dissemination (Alvesson 2003; Ellis & Bochner 2000; Reed-Danahay 1997). A researcher can affect readers' interpretations of a finding by organising data differently or deciding what data to present. In addition, the background of a researcher, including qualification, work history, life experience, worldview, perception of value and the feeling as individual at the time about a particular issue all have their influence on the way the data is analysed. With this in mind, I kept a journal to reflect on the research journey and to capture my thinking process. I have also written a 'memo' after each interview. The perspectives taken in the study asserted that the impact of restructure on the experiences and the thoughts of participants constructing meaning at work were communicated.

*An individual's state of mind at work is personal to the individual! It is private.  
The time was frozen and everything expanded horizontally including the effect*

*on an individual's mind. Every day I think about it and associate with it. After a while, I did not just listen and observe participants. I felt their pain, their frustration, their sadness, their tears when some talked about how management put them through 'job interviews'. They had to reapply for their job or to apply for 'newly created positions after their existing positions were made to disappear' in restructure. They forced themselves to stay calm, to remain sane and to have 'trust in management'. A message of trusting management was communicated implicitly and endlessly during consultation that 'no one will lose their jobs'. (Researcher's reflections)*

In this chapter, I will present the background of the interviews first. This is followed by presenting the findings in respect of Research Questions 1a) "*What types of restructuring are MFAS experiencing?*" and 1b) "*What is the nature of their day-to-day experiences in the current climate of change?*". The purpose is to set the stage for readers to understand the working environment of MFAS under restructuring. I will begin with the background of interviews.

## **Background of Interviews**

This section describes the background of a series of qualitative interviews with 20 professional staff ranging from HEWS 5 to HEWS 10 in two universities in Australia. As mentioned in the previous chapter, two universities were chosen: one from the Unitechs and one from the New Universities (as defined by Marginson and Considine 2000, p.190; see Table 7.2). The interviews were conducted in the participants' offices, some in public areas and some in my office.

There were 14 questions in the interview schedule (see Appendix 3), grouped into three parts. The first part (Interview Questions 1-4), designed to address Research Question 1, sought general personal background information, current employment data and the way the restructuring affected the work of participants; the findings will be presented in this chapter. The second part (Interview Questions 5-8), designed to address Research Question 2, focused on the impact of organisational restructuring on the relationships that participants had with colleagues and with management in participants' working lives; the findings will be presented in Chapter 5. The third part (Interview Questions 9-



14), designed to address Research Question 3, explored what was the important component of their job and their view of administrative staff as a profession; the findings will be presented in Chapter 6. It was expected that the interview questions would demonstrate the significance of the impact of organisational restructure on the working lives of MFAS during restructure.

The open-ended interview questions were emailed to the participants before the interview to help them feel comfortable, to allay any uneasiness and to encourage collaboration. To set the stage for the interview, I explained the reason for the interview to each interviewee. I explained how long the interview would last (typically about one hour) and how it was likely to develop. I stated clearly at the start of each interview that the participant could stop the interview at any time if they felt uncomfortable or unclear. After each interview, I would ask the participant to think of others who might make a suitable participant. On a number of occasions, it was found that participants had already informed their colleagues about the study.

In University A, the faculty manager of a newly merged faculty broadcast the study within the faculty to encourage faculty administrative staff to participate in the study. In the broadcast, staff were asked to inform the faculty manager regarding their participation. During the restructuring process, the faculty manager faced up to different organisational cultures and needed to overcome various communication barriers between two faculties. Having the faculty manager as one of the participants in the study provided a valuable opportunity to understand what the potential opposing viewpoints on the merger of two faculties were.

In this preliminary research, aggregating data from the interviews highlighted the perspectives of MFAS from different levels of employment, backgrounds and work experiences, of the views of MFAS on their identities. The interpretations of participants' words uttered in the interview were presented to the participant(s) to make changes if needed. I took care to present the content of the participants' answers objectively in the thesis by employing direct quotations whenever possible. Their stories were rich, humanising and emotionally charged, conveying the participants' emotions and their views on organisational restructure, and the impact of organisational restructure when describing their personal experiences.

In the next section I will report the findings with regard to Research Question 1a, “*What types of major organisational restructuring are MFAS experiencing*”, and Research Question 1b, “*What is the nature of their day-to-day experiences in the climate of change?*”

## **Background Questions**

The first three interview questions, intended to gather data to help answer Research Question 1a and 1b, covered the background of participants. They were aimed at gathering some historical information and to determine if participants had experienced a major organisational restructure. Specifically, the focus was on their recent experience of change, the reason being that some MFAS may not have had relevant experience to answer the questions if they were hired just before or after the restructure, something that would be clarified later in the interview. I aimed to address Research Question 1a and 1b by encouraging participants to describe freely what had happened in the change process and to make it possible for them to have their say about their experiences.

### **Interview Question 1:**

*How long have you been with the organisation and in your current job?*

This question was designed as an opening question. It allowed participants to focus on and talk openly about things to which definite answers could be given, thus serving as an ‘ice breaker’. The question allowed them to decide how open they would be in the interview. It was also used as a screening question to establish participants’ employment history and their career movement to support Interview Question 3, “*What sort of restructures have you experienced while you have been with the organisation and your current/ex job?*”

Of 20 participants, 11 (55%) were female and 9 (45%) were male. Regarding employment in the university sector, as shown in Table 4.1a, 10 per cent have more than thirty years of service, 10 per cent more than twenty years, 30 per cent more than ten years, 30 per cent have more than five years and 30 per cent have less than five years work experience. Regarding employment in their current job, as shown in Table 4.1b, five out of 20 participants have been in their present job for 10 years, three participants between 4 to 5 years, two participants three years, four participants two

years, and six one or less than one year. One participant was hired as the outcome of a restructure.

**Table 4.1a: Employment data as reported by participants: service in universities**

Service in Universities (Years)	Participants No. (%)
> 30	2 (10)
> 20	2 (10)
> 10	6 (30)
> 5	6 (30)
> 5	4 (20)

**Table 4.1b: Employment data as reported by participants: service in current job**

Service in Current Job (Years)	Participants (No.)
> 10	5
> 5	2
> 4	1
> 3	2
> 2	4
> 1	3
< 1	3

**Interview Question 2:**

*What is your work and educational background?*

This question was asked to find out how participants perceived their work, their job title, and the relationship between their qualifications and their perception toward their work. Regarding type of job, 20 per cent are technical staff, 40 per cent are working in courses and program-related areas whereas 40 per cent are in administration as shown in Table 4.2. In terms of level of employment, 15 per cent are employed as faculty managers.

**Table 4.2: Current position as reported by participants**

Position	Participants No. (%)
Technical	4 (20)
Courses and Programs related	8 (40)
Administration	8 (40)
Total	20

All participants stated that they focused on doing a good job rather than working within a job title during restructure. Participants said that this was because they were loyal to

their workplace and their colleagues, and that they cared about the students' learning experiences. Some participants said that they would not show up for work because of the improper handling of restructure by management. Yet they turned up and helped their colleagues or worked in their personal time as shown in the statement below:

*We just do it and we just do it and we do it with the extra hours. You know, we spend our weekend walking on the beach collecting seaweeds because you know you have to. (MFAS, University A)*

In listening to the audio recordings and reading the transcripts, it became clear that all of the participants owed it to their job to take it seriously, that they personally needed to see the job done properly, and that they worked beyond their job title. This is supported in the literature (Lawler III & Hall 1970) which reports that an individual may consider “the job (is) important to his total identity because of the satisfying social relationships, social status, sense of meaningful activity, or personal security he experiences at work” (pp.313-313). Similarly, a job title encompasses the task identity of a job that employees identified with (Erez & Earley 1993), and it is a motivating tool at work in some cases. Sometimes the work that employees do in their job is different to that described by their job title.

**Table 4.3: Educational qualifications as reported by participants**

<b>Educational Qualification</b>	<b>Participants No. (%)</b>
Master's	10 (50)
Bachelor	5 (25)
Honours	1 (5)
Diploma	1 (5)
Unknown	3 (15)
Total	20

As shown in Table 4.3, 50 per cent of participants have a master's degree, 25 per cent a bachelor's, 5 per cent an honours degree, 5 per cent a diploma, and 15 per cent did not elaborate on their qualification. Interestingly, the level of qualification that an individual has seemed to have a bearing on their view of their job title and their job responsibilities. For some participants, it seemed the educational qualification of participants associated with their job title and their job responsibilities as shown in the statements below.

*to be a good manager your level of emotional intelligence needs to very high. Sort of assume you put in the hard work to make it happen. ... If you do it in 10 minutes, good, if it takes you 10 days to do it. You got to do it. Ok. (MFAS, master's degree, University A)*

*I mean I have to remain quite neutral in order to mediate and get the best outcome for everybody you can't emotionally absorb these sort of things yourself, don't think you'd last very long. (Faculty Manager, bachelor's degree, University A)*

The educational qualification may affect individuals' subjective expectations of a certain level of responsibility and accountability of a job. It also has a bearing on the way in which an individual approaches issues or problems at work as well as what an individual perceives as an appropriate level of service that they provide to or receive from others. Based on their comments, it appears that background, life experience and cognition processes may prescribe or limit the way in which each individual takes part in society and at work.

*there were days that I didn't want to come in but I have a responsibility to my staff in it that they were going through I meant I was going through bad stuffs but they were going through bad stuffs as well. They didn't know what was going to happen to them. So I felt I have a responsibility to be there for them to support them as much as I could. There are days when I had to go home because I was so upset. (Faculty Manager, bachelor's degree; University A)*

*I felt I had a responsibility to be there for my staff to support them as much as I could. (Faculty Manager, bachelor's degree; University A)*

As pointed out by some participants, “a loose position description” also created problems for them at work. Some participants said they felt they were coerced to work outside office hours, to work beyond their job descriptions or even to overlook university policies on some occasions when asked by supervisor or academics. Some tried to resist but felt they were labelled as being not helpful, especially during restructure. Such fear explained why participants felt they were powerless to say no. According to participants, this type of behaviour appeared primarily either when

participants were located in an isolated area away from colleagues or away from a direct supervisor. In some workplaces, some MFAS were asked to work as personal assistants to various professors (to do diary management or travel bookings) and to work on complex specialised, skilled tasks (statistical data analysis, writing academic reports, course accreditations, and writing research papers). A participant (University A) who was asked to work as personal assistant with the title of manager had resigned not long after such an incident. It could be concluded that the flexibility of a generic position description means that once it has been provided to both supervisor and staff created an adverse side effect. Overall, there were high expectations of MFAS to perform regardless of their level of employment and the job they had been hired to do. Some participants remarked that no proper job-relevant training or support was provided.

**Interview Question 3:**

*What sort of restructures have you experienced while you have been with the organisation and your current/ex job?*

This question was designed to find out the number of restructuring experiences that an individual has had at work. As shown in Table 4.4, five per cent have experienced restructure five times, 10 per cent have four times, 10 per cent three times, 45 per cent twice and 30 per cent either one or none.

**Table 4.4: Significant organisational restructures experienced by participants**

Significant Organisational Restructures Experienced No.	Participants No. (%)
5	1 (5)
4	2 (10)
3	2 (10)
2	9 (45)
1 or 0	6 (30)

It was clear from participants’ answers that they differentiated between significant organisational restructurings and minor changes as shown in Table 4.5. Participants from University B did not report the amalgamation of faculties, and the centralisation and decentralisation of student services and technical support as major organisational restructure. Participants from University B also did not report change in class timetabling as minor organisational restructure. This was due to the accessibility of participants in University B. Although minor changes did not cause significant retrenchment, all participants said that it certainly increased the level of stress in their

day-to-day work. Participants from both universities stressed that the impact of organisational change had an effect on academics' workload which had flow-on effects on the demand of their day to day work.

**Table 4.5: Major and Minor Organisational Restructures Experienced by Participants**

<b>Organisational Restructures Experienced</b>	<b>University A</b>	<b>University B</b>
<b>Major</b>		
The reorganisation of a faculty	x	x
The amalgamation of faculties	x	
The centralisation and decentralisation of student services and technical support	x	
The relocation to different campuses	x	x
<b>Minor: Learning and mastering job-specific knowledge and systems</b>		
financial information system	x	x
Student information system	x	x
Class timetabling	x	
Accreditation and re-accreditation of course	x	x
University record management system	x	v
Different kinds of software	x	x

More than 50 per cent of participants considered that the focus of major restructures was concentrated on reducing the expenditure on permanent professional staff. There has been a big increase in the use of fixed-term contract or agency staff in filling any vacant positions of MFAS rather than offering a tenure in a job, apparently due to pressure from senior management. What was more obvious was the message from senior management to staff who have financial responsibility, given in financial meetings, that they have been asked to contain the expenditure on general support staff and train general support staff to work smarter at work. "It appeared that senior management only

focused on aggregated expenditure on professional staff instead of identifying the sources of excessive expenditure in the university. Senior management has also said that professional staff is an indirect cost in the university business.

As the researcher of the study and working as an MFAS, I found it depressing to hear the way in which the change processes were conducted in the eyes of participants and the number of organisational restructures that some have been through. About 25 per cent of the participants (including faculty managers and MFAS with more than 10 years' work experience in the university sector) have resigned from their institutions since 2009. No position was recruited except for one replacement and the workload of the remaining vacant positions was added onto the duties of existing internal staff. As stated by participants, there were no attempts by management to understand the impact on individuals' perception of this or to manage the perception of staff carefully in restructures. Understandably, it is impossible for management to control or direct the perceptual experience of a change process. That being said, it is possible for management to manage it cautiously in order to minimise a bad impression. This is supported by the literature which observes that a poorly managed restructure has a long-lasting effect on staff (Watson 2008) and that a badly managed restructure could result in losing valuable, committed, talented staff. It is important for management to understand the problem of perception in what an individual sees, how an individual feels and what an individual hears. This perspective was supported by Reissner (2010), arguing that disgruntled staff may propagate their negative experiences to others. In many cases, this included colleagues, students, family, friends and sometimes anyone (Gergen 1991).

#### **Interview Question 4:**

*If I ask you how the restructures of the workplace affect your work, the way you work and your feeling towards your job, what would you say?*

The point of this question was to let participants release their raw emotion to reveal part of the working lives as MFAS during restructure. In responding to this question, I observed that participants' voices became louder, their tone became tense and the pace of the conversation got faster. Their plain and simple stories show that participants did not hide their emotions:



*I was told to bottle up. It made me very angry... I can't deal with it.... I don't care anymore. (MFAS, University A)*

*Well I got no support from HR because I wasn't an affected person. ... I couldn't apply outside my job description. (MFAS, University A)*

*I am also critical about Human Resources Unit involvement in the change. I doubt their involvement in my mind. They let us many people bumble along I would say. (MFAS, University A)*

*And it was just the facial expression of this person was so uhmm you know so insulting to people who are asking question. ... has this smirk on ... face, rolled ... eyes?... And it is really that attitude emanating from ... and the people around ... that they really just come here to tick the box that we have been out and we talked to the people. They have been informed of the process. But it is not really genuine. (MFAS, University A)*

*I went for interview and I got a very good reaction and I felt very good. Oh...this felt ok. And then there was no result. And it was delay. ....And it got delay, and delay for another 10 days. And finally I got an email .....that sorry you were un-successful. (MFAS, University A)*

*In general terms, the specific skills had been dismissed. And technical staff have been in some way downgraded. ... They wanted a more technical staff pool of people who could be just moved around all over the place. .... Take them off the shelf here and put them back on the shelf over there. (MFAS, University A)*

The following incident gave some insight into the experience of some participants in one of the many bad restructures without consultation with affected MFAS. In one of many restructured faculties in both universities, an “autocratic leader” in University A divided a team of MFAS who had been in the same job for many years into two groups. The leader then re-classified the job by assigning different job titles: *teaching MFAS* and *research MFAS*. The teaching MFAS felt that they had *no career path whatsoever* under the new structure because the term *research MFAS* was *perceived as smarter* whereas *teaching MFAS* was *perceived as the less smart people*. Teaching MFAS

participants said that the reclassification was an unreasonable and unfair decision, and that *their career promotion* would be limited by the job title of ‘teaching MFAS’ since they *have a ceiling at the top of level 6* whereas they (*research MFAS*) *start at the bottom of level 7*, given both groups had the same qualifications (bachelor’s, master’s or doctoral degree). Participants with experience of more than three significant restructures, within the faculty, mentioned that the “*autocratic leader*”, who rejected the idea of having consultation with staff, ended up with *a cheese with a lot of holes that things keep falling through* restructure. Participants from the faculty remarked that the “*autocratic leader*” did not recognise the characteristic of the place, *the heterogeneous nature of the faculty*, and had chosen the *garbage in, garbage out* approach to carry out the faculty restructure. In 2011, the contract of the “*autocratic leader*” was not renewed; however, the faculty has a long road to recover.

At the time of undergoing a major restructuring of MFAS workplaces, about 40 per cent of MFAS had lost the job that they loved or had been told to move to a new location. Some had their jobs re-classified to a lower scale or their current job had been *disestablished* with limited or no consultation. Some participants remarked that they were in distress:

*I got a phone call on an extend leave middle of the year from ... ‘ohh by the way your job is just been disestablished’ ... an interesting word, in other words, just written off from the book. But there was another job at level 7 if I wanted I could apply for it. So I applied for it and got the level 7 job. (MFAS, University A)*

*...it is possible the lowest paid role in the faculty as a technical role ...it is my life. ... it was quite a disturbing time. It went on forever, it went on for months. (MFAS, University A)*

Those participants who had to apply for a new job while working in their existing jobs and learning a new job stated that the demand of the workplace and the feeling of distress resulted in insufficient time for them to write their application at work. Most noted that they were not given time release or help, “*no, not at work. I do it at home. Because I wouldn’t have time*” (MFAS, University A). Some participants felt that they were made redundant indirectly along with others, who left their new job shortly after,

because they went through a job application and interview process in restructure. Several remarked that there was no difference between their previous job and the new job in terms of task. The differences were a different job title, change of reporting line, and minimum career progression, with some still working in the same office. Two participants remarked that they were *resentful* because they were demoted to positions of lower prestige with a lot more work and at a lower pay level. Interestingly, participants who were employed under research funding or on fixed-term contracts felt *more secure than many permanent staff* and appeared less fearful of losing their job even though some had been through more than three major restructures.

All participants stated that a top-down approach was chosen in faculty restructuring, a view supported by comments from participants who had experienced more than three significant restructurings in the university sector. Some participants stated that management used the word *reorganisation* to avoid the university change process, such as changing a job title of an individual in their faculty. More than 40 per cent of participants specifically mentioned that words such as *toe the line with the change* and *the problem group* were used in the workplace and that this had created uneasiness in them. Some participants said that towards the final stage of negotiation in their change process, management had also suggested that a staff reduction might have to be made in case an insufficient number of staff had chosen to *come on board*. This was perceived as coercion by management, trying to get staff to buy into a new structure. On a few occasions, management openly made statements such as *if xzy leaves, who cares*. Some MFAS became stressed and feared the loss of their job when they were asked about their feelings after hearing those comments at work, giving the impression of working in a toxic working environment. However, when asked why they did not leave the workplace, one participant said that leaving a job might not be an option for everyone because of *financial responsibility (that) they can't risk moving*.

Some participants commented that, from their observation, there were staff at work who continued to exhibit a reluctance to support change. Although staff followed instructions and did what was asked of them during the implementation stage, some participants said they would not voice constructive suggestions, and some said they would not reveal any potential problems to management in meetings. It looked as if staff were fearful of losing their job so they acted like they were working harder to

ensure they would keep their job. The majority of participants stated that the results of an improper change process were the distancing, backstabbing, alienating and aggravating of problems among colleagues and towards management. Some participants reported that a number of colleagues had to put up with aggressive, angry outbursts by others at work and some had encountered this at home. Some participants stated that in the absence of organisational support some participants changed their work attitude at work or created stories in meetings and in corridor gatherings that destroyed their workplace relationship. These outcomes were the result of a lack of trust and a lack of transparency by management in handling change. It undermined the purpose of restructuring and the need for it.

*I don't know what was going on in the management. There was a long delay in placing people, didn't know what was going on. There were a lot of uncertainties. There was a lack of clarity in the restructure. (MFAS, University A)*

Regarding the need to communicate information about restructuring and the process involved to staff, participants reported that on a number of occasions the release of information about new policies and procedures was neither timely nor sufficiently widely communicated. At the same time, staff were overloaded with information. Participants reported that often they needed to familiarise themselves with new procedures and policies *on the fly*.

The interviews revealed that senior management were seemingly not aware that some technologies or information technology policies were impractical and unrealistic, with these getting in the way of both academics and MFAS performing their duties. This view was supported by all participants, except one faculty manager in University A, showing that clinging to inappropriate technologies or policies reflects the determination and the distancing of senior management from the key function of a university.

*It is a direct communication between academics and one of us. The management is not really in the loop so to speak. (MFAS, University A)*

It is argued in the literature (Chen 2007) that the key function of a university is to play its role in society through teaching, research and community engagement. There are two groups of employees who are directly engaged in university activities, academics and professional staff. For the past two years, 41.31 per cent (2009) and 42.05 per cent (2010) respectively of universities' operating revenue has come from teaching in HE (DEERW 2010). Most participants claimed that the resources allocated to hire a number of senior level 'managers' in central units could have been allocated more effectively to faculties so they could hire more MFAS to provide better support to academics in teaching and research.

*They were very bottom one and they were dismissed. Within a few months, there were piled of things to be done but no one to do it. They then have to reemploy casual people to do the work. That's would cost a lot more..... we actually need more people at the 'cold face'. We don't need more managers. (MFAS, University A)*

All participants agreed that change was about stepping out of their comfort zone. It was an opportunity for personal growth and they did not reject the idea of change. Some were excited about change. A number of participants used restructuring as a way to escape from their existing job. A few participants even *wrote off* their own jobs in a job-designing phase.

*I take the opportunity to improve what we can do better. An opportunity for everyone. (Faculty Manager, University A)*

However, participants stated that there were a number of key issues that were not addressed: employment security, purpose of restructuring, inclusive and transparent approach to restructure, and clear, concise and consistent communication. Most participants claimed that senior management used repetitive speech in most communication channels that led to staff no longer paying attention and losing interest. Some participants took up secondment opportunities, *being in an area that I would like to work*, to avoid restructuring. An interesting observation by some participants was that

some of the staff who felt constrained to conform with management's restructuring decisions were not happy or angry or even resentful of others who acted differently.

This is supported by the literature that the way in which an individual organise and interpret the information around them affects the way individuals recall their experiences (Watson 2008). Participants also noted that different people react differently to different things. This perspective was supported by Gergen (1971, 1991) when saying that life is subjective, and that one person's experience should not be considered less important than another's. Every individual tries to make their life worth living and give as much value to it as they can. It is therefore not a straightforward matter to understand and generalise the impact that restructuring has on the working lives of MFAS, on their feeling and on their jobs.

### **Working Life and Experience during Organisational Restructure – Summary Description**

As stated in the previous section, the experience of working life during organisational restructuring could be summarised “*as nitpicking and disengagement in a dysfunctional workplace*”. After a series of unproductive consultations, the lack of trust became an unbalancing effect that rippled all the way through to other employees who also felt unsettled. Volkwein & Zhou (2003) also observe such an effect, which resulted in damaged staff morale and a damaged working relationship of MFAS.

One of the themes recurring in the process of restructuring, in fact, the most significant, was the issue of job security. When an individual was faced with uncertainty, the focus became individualised in remarks such as *it is not just a job, it is my life* by three participants.

*What I am going to do? I am too old to find a job.* (MFAS, University A)

It seemed some staff became *paranoid* (four participants) when there was insufficient information communicated to them either in meetings or broadcast. It was also found in Watson's research (2008) that an individual might go through their day-to-day work aimlessly during a bad restructure, as it is a physical and emotional drain on an

individual. Increasingly frustrated with management, some participants became distressed (three participants) and some started creating meaning at work from their perceptions via self-categorisation to make sense of their situations including self-blame (three participants), something also observed in the literature (Sommer & Baumeister 1998).

Several participants reported that some colleagues became inquisitive when they had limited information about the change process. Others started to believe what was available to them, just to make sense of it. Quite often a rumour became truth without any substantial evidence, which hindered the restructuring process. As mentioned by all participants, managers needed to be able to empathise with their staff since that helped participants to cope with their situation during restructure. An individual may respond adversely when faced with an unknown future and some participants felt as if they were in *a restructuring cocoon*. Their experiences might affect the perception of an individual. At the end of restructuring, participants felt that, *We were done. We tried to fit back into our normal life*. Some stated that they had ill-feelings towards some staff. Hence, it is important for managers to make sure individuals feel they can express their true opinions even if they would not do so otherwise. At the end of some of the interview sessions, some participants were openly hoping that their participation in the study would help them to communicate their experiences to others. They wanted their stories to be heard *so what are you going to do with all this. I feel like I've really opened my mouth; where do you intend to publish the material, journal?* (three participants)

Based on the interviews it seemed that the faculty managers were less emotional compared to other participants. There was a general perception that a faculty manager would also be less emotional, as mentioned by some participants. Three faculty managers who were also participants agreed that they were expected to have a high degree of emotional intelligence because of their positions. However, as I listened to the tapes for a number of times, it became clear to me that the faculty managers were faced with similar problems to those by less senior people, but in a different context.

*I held on to the statement that no one will lose their jobs right through because I didn't want to be out on the street so I just held onto it all the way through*



*thinking something will happen. But in the end nothing happened.... I just felt like they just wanted me to go away. (Faculty Manager, University A)*

There is no perfect organisational restructuring. It is almost practically impossible to have a balance between too much and too little consultation, a view supported by all the participants. An authoritarian leader may be viewed as an autocrat whereas a consultative leader may be seen as laissez faire (Bolman & Deal 2011). However, it seemed that management did not focus on retaining talented staff, both academic and professional, in organisational restructuring.

Regarding communication during restructure, the right message should be communicated to staff in a way that staff can make sense of it. The message needs to focus on the majority of staff who will accept and support the reasoning behind the change. Often some of the words used will be ambiguous and perplexing to some of the staff. It is important to put practicality into the situation rather than theorising and problematising an issue. Management needs to understand that restructure has most of its impact on staff because of the potential for uncertainty. Like everything and anything in life, individuals see what they want to see, to listen to and to make sense of, a view also supported in the literature (Alvesson et al. 2008; Gergen 1971, 1991).

It became obvious in the interviews that, at least according to the participants, management cannot control the way people feel or their emotions. Still, management can manage some of their perceptions carefully in uncertain times. The majority of participants stated that those who had the responsibility for implementing change needed to communicate in a way that staff felt their sincerity and that management needed to restore trust and create opportunities for those who felt betrayed in the process. When the primary goals of change management are to improve organisational performance and bring about a resurgence of the organisation's financial situation, it is necessary for management to restore hope by creating a belief in their staff that it is possible to maintain stability in the workplace. The continued uncertainty at work has an adverse effect on body and mind of staff, also mentioned by Sommer & Baumeister (1998) and Volkwein & Zhou (2003). At the time of restructure individuals may not fully understand their own feelings, the way they feel and the reasons for it.



However, as some participants, especially from University A, remarked regarding organisational restructure, *these are the same predictable outcomes with a bottom line focus from management who sit in the Ivory Tower have lost touch with reality. Each event is a replica of a similar outcome.*↵

This section has summarised the positive and negative feelings of MFAS towards their co-workers and managers, their experience of restructures and their perceptions of senior management during restructure. It demonstrates that MFAS are not resistant to change in both universities, but rather it is the lack of clear direction from management and the poor consultation process during restructure that undermines the purpose of organisational restructure.

### **Reflection as a Self-ethnographic Researcher**

When I began this research, I postulated many procedural and rational assumptions that would underpin my topic. There would be many emotional imperatives because it is a study of the working lives and identities of MFAS. It would concern feelings, individuals' memories of events and their perceptions of issues, both of which are subjective, as stated in the literature (Gergen 1971, 1991). Being one of the affected MFAS myself, the most difficult situation I had found myself in during a change process was doing my job as a supervisor without support from management. An organisational restructure process lasting potentially five years, or longer, will take a toll on everyone, including myself. Memory is how participants choose to remember and want to construct their experience and feeling (Gergen 1991). Self-reflexivity (Swan 2008) made me re-think what it meant to be an MFAS in restructure: did my research affect my reaction to my own situation?; did I see the real agenda of current restructure?; would I react differently to the change? I felt self-reflexivity was relevant to my current experience because it validated the emotions generated in the current organisational restructuring. I used the reflective journal to reflect and to document my thoughts regarding my feelings, emotions and reasoning.

In the interview, there was laughter, anger, tears, frustration, rage, contentment and dissatisfaction via observation, conversation and statements. The participants' journeys

were emotional. In some cases, these were similar to mine while I wore two hats, working as an MFAS while completing my study. Their stories were not academic ones but they were real. I was drawn into their worlds, seeing their body language (such as gestures and facial expressions), listening to their voices and reading what they had said. All of these disturbed my thoughts and my feelings in the beginning. As I went further into data analysis, I began to be caught up in their stories with their frustration, their tears in the interview. Browsing through the data, I came across participants' comments on their experience of restructuring which prompted me to find solutions or at least ways to improve the restructuring process. Hence, it was important to continue writing reflective journal.

Their stories have given me a strong reason to stand up when faced with a moral dilemma and with ethical issues in my role as MFAS in my unit in the current organisational restructuring. In my personal restructuring journey at work, I was asked to change a number of job titles in preparation for a flexible workforce in a new faculty structure within my unit. I rejected the suggestion since it could have had a bearing upon the opportunities of my team in the new structure, especially as the new structure had never been communicated to staff other than the executive. Like other participants, I made a conscious decision to suppress my feelings as a way of dealing with day-to-day problems or frustrations. I also feared the loss of my job when various statements were made, e.g., *Stella said NO to academics, make sure she will not have a job in the new structure; She has too much power, we got to get rid of her; She is just a support staff, what does she know?* Towards the end, having had to deal with day-to-day operational issues and to cope with the level of stress caused by a series of fruitless meetings together with an unsupportive supervisor, I found it very hard to agree with trifling and worthless directions at work. It was also extremely difficult to maintain high employee morale with no support from management.

In my personal journey, being an MFAS myself just adds another level of empathy and understanding of the experience of the study participants. A bad work experience in someone's life journey has a long-term effect on the individual, who as a result may form a particular view of workplaces, organisations, colleagues and management, something also mentioned in the literature (Gergen 1971; Watson 2008). It is important

for management to listen to both constructive and destructive viewpoints in decision-making process (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003).

### **Identification of Individuals' Metaphors during Restructure**

It was clear that some participants got emotional again (with tears and anger in their choice of words) when talking about their experiences of restructuring in the interview, proving that there was a real and deep emotional connection with their experiences. Every day an individual decides what to do, such as going to work, going out to enjoy their life, going to accept a new suggestion from management, etc. The assumed belief of an individual affects the way an individual interprets conversations, body language and information received. It is the feeling of anticipation where an individual faces due to the unknown. These were also supported by Gergen (1971, 1991) and Sveningsson & Alvesson (2003).

It seemed that when there was a bad restructure together with an unsupportive supervisor at work some participants felt they were cheated by the restructures. The lack of real consultation, framed by most participants as *a box ticking exercise*, was retrospectively justification by management. For some, it seemed that management was preventing staff from challenging the purpose of restructuring. It was in this rather unsettled, pressured working environment that individuals started to take on a 'role' in the change process and some went into overdrive. For some, it affected not only their working lives but also their personal life. Throughout the interviews and data analysis, I maintained a list of words that were often used by participants. I also wrote specific descriptions of how each individual told me they felt during organisational restructure when were asked. These repeated words and specific description were imported into Nvivo 8.0 for categorisation by grouping phase and meanings as described in Chapter 3. The following categories were identified in participants' transcripts, showing how some individuals (themselves or their colleagues) positioned themselves during restructure:

- 1) Fighter – fighting for restructure against enemies (1 participant mentioned)
- 2) Swinger – supporting or opposing action freely to take cover under restructure (2 participants mentioned)

- 3) Prisoner – caught in or enveloped by situations, e.g. I needed to search my own direction; I wanted to distance myself from everyone; I did not want to come to work (2 participants mentioned)
- 4) Protected species – individual who was protected by being either a favourite or very difficult to deal with, hence a restructure would not affect their position (2 participants mentioned)
- 5) Loner – avoiding others to stay under the radar under restructure (1 participant mentioned)
- 6) Opportunist – observing opportunity to improve their position via either leaving or promotion (1 participant mentioned)

The above 6 categories of positioning provided a snapshot into how each individual participant took on their working lives and their perception of their work environment, particularly their experience of stress during restructure. In both universities, female participants mentioned issues from the 6 categories more than their male counterparts did. But, more participants in University A mentioned the 6 categories than University B. In University A, some participants who lost their old job unwillingly had taken on the Loner category at the end of restructure. However, some of those in Loner category in both universities took on the Fighter category after restructure because of their passion to create improved learning environment for students. Participants who were faculty managers took on the Opportunist category. Overall, however, such categories should be recognised as a list of fluid metaphors that participants took on and switched into during restructure.

Given time, individuals and organisations will adapt to a new structure as it unfolds. However, as the majority of participants remarked, changing the workplace should be an incremental process in a university setting, because decisions made by management have the potential for either destroying or building a healthy working relationship among staff. A pleasant and contented organisational culture would help building and strengthening an organisation and thus help it to achieve its mission. Many management decisions would have failed without the support from staff during restructure in the past few years according to some participants. The fact that they did not fail was proof of the importance of loyal, committed, talented staff. Staff, both academics and professional,

are the most valuable asset of a university. As mentioned above, a badly managed restructure would be faced with great resistance and difficulties, and cause a lot of distress among staff. In some workplaces, staff are still dealing with a number of operational and functional issues years later.

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter reported the findings of the first four questions asked in an interview conducted in two Australian public universities as part of a study that investigated the impact of organisational restructuring on the working lives of MFAS during restructure. The findings show that a misperception of poor educational qualifications of MFAS in HE does not hold in today's workforce.

More than 70 per cent of participants in University A had experienced two more major organisational changes compared to participants in University B, namely 1) the amalgamation of faculties, 2) the centralisation and decentralisation of student services and technical support. However this was because of the accessibility of MFAS in University B. Although participants from both universities had experienced of all the similarly minor changes, it appeared participants from University A, who have had experienced all major organisational changes, had stronger views and emotive feelings compared to participants in University B. However this was not to suggest University B had a better change process. Although minor changes did not cause significant retrenchment, all participants said that it certainly increased stress in their day-to-day work. Participants from both universities stated that the impact of organisational change had on academics' workload had a flow-on effects by way of increasing demand on MFAS. Because resources were not allocated to hire additional MFAS to properly support academics, tensions between academics and administrative staff subsequently increased. The experience of change and the expectation of each participant affect their construction of individual identity (Reissner 2010; Sommer & Baumeister 1998). Hence, it is important to minimise bad experiences of organisational change.

There are a number of approaches that MFAS take in dealing with organisational restructuring. Some take a negative approach, some take a positive approach, and some look forward to their not so distant retirement or look for a new job. A majority of participants viewed the consultation process as ‘a box ticking exercise’ that had lost its real purpose. Given organisational restructuring is now a regular scene in Australian universities, these findings indicate the need to focus on practices that raise staff morale and give some comfort to staff. Management needs to find a compromise that gives staff what they need and what management want. The implications of a ‘box ticking’ consultation process for the working lives of MFAS during restructure are discussed further in Chapter 5.

## Chapter 5

### Demands of Key Stakeholders and Support for MFAS During Restructure

Reality is merely an illusion, albeit a very persistent one.

Albert Einstein

As stated at the beginning of Chapter 4, I feel obliged, as a researcher and as a MFAS, to let the voices of participants be heard and be considered when preparing to present and report the results (in Chapters 4, 5 and 6). This is designed to allow readers to experience the participants' journeys in a highly political work environment during restructure with minimum academic interpretation. I will make a separate academic interpretation of the results in Chapter 7.

In Chapter 4, I reported the findings with regards to Research Question 1a, "*What types of major organisational restructuring are MFAS experiencing*", and Research Question 1b, "*What is the nature of their day-to-day experiences in the climate of change?*", concerning general personal background, current employment and the way in which the restructuring affected the work of MFAS, on the basis of the responses to Interview Questions 1-4. Two clear findings emerged. First, the majority of MFAS viewed the consultation process as *a box ticking exercise* (four comments from participants). Most participants have at least a bachelor's, master's or doctoral degree. Second, the uncertainty at work has a negative impact on the body and mind of employees (Sommer & Baumeister 1998; Volkwein & Zhou 2003). It was necessary for management to find a balance between the 'needs' of staff and the 'wants' of management when conducting organisational restructuring. Arguably, the most valuable asset of the organisation is a stable workforce of talented, loyal, committed employees (Ramlall 2006).

This chapter reports the findings with regards to Research Question 2, "*How do MFAS resolve the demands of key stakeholders, students, academics, other administrative staff and the public, in the current changing work environment?*", concerning the relationships between MFAS and colleagues and with management, on the basis of the responses to Interview Questions 5 to 8. These will be discussed in some detail in the

next section. All direct quotations from participants will be presented in italics with reference to their universities. Furthermore, any unattributed quotations and cases where the university is not specified in Chapters 5, 6 and 7 should be read as statements indicative of similar statements made by participants and from both universities.

### **MFAS Working Lives**

Overall the interviews progressed smoothly and participants were enthusiastic about the study. The body language of a number of participants suggested they were relaxed and some were laughing at the end of the interview. Some mentioned they enjoyed being part of the study: *I think I don't need to see my doctor this afternoon. I feel happier now* (MFAS).

There was a difference between interviewing faculty managers and other MFAS. I noticed that faculty managers were less emotionally expressive in their choice of words than the other interviewees. The faculty managers seemed to be less inclined to embellish their replies to the interview questions with emotive language. In Chapter 4 I reported that all participants had an expectation of managers having a high degree of emotional intelligence skills and yet the data analysis showed that the gestures of faculty managers were less emotional than expected by the participants. This is corroborated in the literature (Turner 2009, chapter 4), which argues that an individual's perception may have a significant impact on the way he or she thinks and feels about their roles at work and their expectations of them.

*.... Take it as it is.* (MFAS, University A)

*... Not much I can do, I try to get the best out of it.* (MFAS, University A)

*... will leave next time!* (MFAS, University A)



### **Interview Question 5:**

*Can you describe what your normal working day is like and what a difficult working day is like?*

The point of this question was to understand what MFAS do in their everyday work. Participants were asked to give examples of their normal days and their difficult days. This was to focus on how participants defined a 'normal' and a 'difficult' working day and what were the key issues affecting their performance at work. The purpose was to identify and target areas of difficulty in the work by MFAS and to understand how they resolved or dealt with any issues causing difficulty. The majority of participants stated that their job formed the biggest part of their life. The work that individuals do in their job helps them make sense of their life in their workplace, particularly during restructure. This is supported by Erez and Earley (1993) who also argue that the work activities of individuals are important to their self-worth and hence central to the construction of their self-identity. In addition, their experience at work, their perceptions, attitudes and practices contribute to their sense of value and identity (Gergen 1971; Gergen & Gergen 1983). Similarly, because an individual has different identities in different spaces and at different times (Whetten & Godfrey 1998), this increases the complexity of self-identity construction during restructure.

The following list summarises what respondents considered making for a difficult day at work: managing people, lack of authority, continuous interruptions, unrealistic deadlines, poor work relationships, excessive workload, communicating jargon with implicit meanings, inflexible bureaucratic procedures, lack of relevant information, isolation and working with either out of date or malfunctioning equipment. In a newly merged faculty in University A, some teaching MFAS had to spend an extra 20 minutes wheeling teaching equipment from one building to the other when lifts had broken down during the semester. This created extra pressure when participants were time poor with heavy workloads due to an insufficient number of MFAS in the workplace after restructure. Interestingly, faculty managers pointed out there were *unpleasant days rather than difficult days* at work. Their *unpleasant days* were caused by issues of people management, with problems such as having staff constantly needing attention, staff wanted to be the centre of attention, staff sugar-coating everything to hide real issues, staff refusing to accept 'no' for an answer, and staff interfering with

administrative decisions of which they had no understanding or for which they had no responsibility. This is echoed in the following statements:

*...crying women in the office.* (MFAS, University A)

*...people issues or people waiting to see you or complaints going up. ....I can hardly remember where I am up to. I can't respond on time for various things and the next problem has just arrived.* (Faculty Manager, University A)

It appeared that faculty managers themselves had an expectation of dealing with difficult issues as part of their job as stated in the literature (Rosser 2000; Turner 2009). This explained why from their perspectives, they had unpleasant days instead of difficult days. It was also reported in Chapter 4 that a number of participants expected faculty managers to deal with difficult situations effectively. MFAS who were not in a management position found their lack of authority had made their job difficult which also created frustrating situations for them. In many situations, they were told to *wait for their manager to make a decision* instead of exercising their initiative. This also happened to MFAS who had extensive relevant administrative experience in their job. They were still required to *wait for their manager to make a decision*.

The constant interruptions and unrealistic deadlines at work created difficult days for all participants. *They need to understand their requests will not be dealt with immediately* (mentioned by three participants). *I work with the person, I don't just act on a request. What he doesn't know is I need to understand the reason behind it for me to be efficient and effective* (mentioned by four participants). *I am not an idiot running with papers* (mentioned by two participants). It seemed that the attitude of a requester (either an academic or an administrative staff member or a student) had an effect on individuals' feelings. Poor workplace etiquette also contributed to a difficult day for MFAS. Some participants mentioned that sometimes clients (students, academics and MFAS in higher positions) behaved badly towards them but behaved well when faced with their supervisors. They felt stupid or undermined when their supervisor took sides with client(s) either intentionally or unintentionally.

Another category of difficult day was one that involved procedural problems. Sometimes participants spent more time on explaining jargon or new terminology in university procedures, and more resources on simplifying complex manuals to make them easier to read for other staff. A number of participants pointed out that the most difficult step was to ensure compliance. Some academics, higher-level management staff or MFAS would ignore university rules and policies because of their positions or because they were part of some special group. These types of behaviour placed an extra strain on their work according to some participants.

The physical location of staff was another issue that contributed to difficulties. Some participants were located on different floors, in different buildings or on different campuses from their supervisor. The problem of having subordinates located far away from their direct supervisor created isolation. A few participants complained about the noise of the 'open office'. They pointed out that they spent more time on ensuring that the confidentiality of phone conversations, emails or documents was maintained at work when they were dealing with confidential information in the open office. The next significant factor that contributed to a difficult day for both faculty managers and other MFAS was incomplete or lack of information to do their work. This made some participants feel undermined because it prevented them from simply doing their jobs: *tricky negotiation to undertake with limited knowledge; you've got to develop your knowledge on the fly.*

In terms of their normal working days, all participants agreed that they spent a lot of time on the following tasks: answering emails and phones, attending meetings, resolving academics problems, explaining policies to academics and others, drafting procedures, implementing policies, monitoring and preparing financial forecast, coordinating events, planning and organising class timetabling, and dealing with student or staff issues.

#### **Interview Question 6:**

*Discuss the specialisations that are involved in doing your job.*

This question aimed to identify the specific skills that MFAS needed to do their work. It appeared that the specific skills MFAS had were largely discredited because they were non-academic staff regarded as members of an unimportant group. A list of required

specific skills was part of the position description in recruitment for different levels of MFAS. In addition, a number of MFAS position descriptions require specific qualifications, tertiary education (see Appendix 8) and in some cases a doctoral degree (see Appendix 8). Central to this question was a desire to demonstrate that MFAS are members of a profession just like those occupying other professional jobs, and that MFAS are not 'unskilled' or 'have no formal qualification'. Participants named the following specific skills as essential: people management skills, networking skills, analytical skills, lateral strategic thinking skills, writing skills, communication skills, organisational skills, knowledge of workplace specific systems and time management skills. Some of these specific skills require a formal qualification. As stated by participants, MFAS are required to have the above skills in order to be able to perform some of their normal work and to deal with issues on difficult days. Overall, their day-to-day work required good planning and organisational skills, lateral thinking and most importantly time management plus people managing skills.

*I'm responsible for the output of about 25 people across finance, marketing, governance, HR, a range of areas. My own sort of job really is primarily oversight, compliance, I have quite a bit of input into the budget, the strategic plan, HR management and it's really quite I suppose an advisor sort of role, you know policies procedures and I think the skills you need to have, good negotiation and mediation skills because you know things get escalated to here and that's more or less where it has to end. (Faculty manager, University A)*

*There are patience, attention to details, there are lot of computer works. You have to priority tasks as tasks come in through emails, through the doors, all sort. ....Also try to foresee problem before it arise. (MFAS, University B)*

*.. specialises in data management. Because I work on 3 now going to be 4 ARC Linkage projects. My role is to manage a lot of data. (MFAS, University A)*

*Very technical skills like understanding the systems at the same time it is about the general skill such as communication, patience. (MFAS, University B)*

### **Interview Question 7:**

*What happens when problems come up, how do you deal with them and who do you turn to for support?*

The question was constructed to find out the types of problems MFAS encountered, the sources of those problems, the way they resolved those problems, and the types of support they received at work. Remarkably, the most common response by participants pointed to a lack of support from their supervisor. A few raised the issue of increasing workload with their supervisor but felt that they were largely ignored. Some commented there were significant increases of incidents of rudeness in the workplace during restructure and that workplace etiquette had disappeared.

*'A' who was told to implement university policies faced with hostile treatments in emails, in meetings or in corridors. Some even ignoring 'A' when they walked pass. I found it unacceptable even. I too disagreed with 'A''s approach however I felt sad and angry that management would allow it. People like myself who did not agree with impolite behaviour towards 'A' received a similar treatment. I was shouted at by some academics in a function in front of others because they were angry with 'A'. (Researcher's reflections on own experience)*

The number of incidents of poor business and social etiquette in the workplace seemed to increase during restructure. It happened in meetings, at social events and in day-to-day business. It had an impact on all levels of staff including MFAS and senior management. However, a few participants mentioned that management would either play it down or laugh it off as if it was a joke. Some management staff even stated it was not an issue because *it happened to others*. It appeared management did endorse bullying type behaviours during restructure. As a senior lecturer in University A said, *management is only focused on their own career. They have no concern for others. This is just a stepping stone for them. They won't stay long*. As stated in the literature (Bolman & Deal 2011), this behaviour was related to the existing organisational culture in some workplaces. The action that management took projected an unprofessional and poisonous image of management in the participants' views. Although the majority of participants acknowledged the difficulty of being in a management position, they considered it part of the responsibility of being a supervisor, at whatever level. Sometimes, it appeared that management had chosen an easy option *to do nothing in*

*order to maintain the status quo.* The situation was worse on some days in some workplaces when the “F” word was used in a hostile way in staff conversations. Participants felt they had reached a breaking point sometimes due to the lack of support from their supervisor. Some felt they were trapped at work.

### ***Role of supervisor***

Supervisors played a critical role in the working lives of MFAS particularly during restructure. A number of participants stated that supervisors needed to align the capabilities of existing staff with the needs of the business in the future. According to the majority of participants, supervisors should have the ability to communicate the main goals of the restructure clearly to staff. In many cases, they felt their supervisors were single-minded, therefore, it was important for supervisors to consider matters from different perspectives. This view is backed up in the literature (Gothey & Jones 1996; Tuner 2009), and as mentioned in Chapter 4; managerial staff need to have an open mind to think and see beyond the current situation and current issues, particularly in difficult times.

A number of participants complained that their supervisor did not take reasonable responsibility in organisational restructuring, and that they received no or limited appropriate support or relevant training to do their jobs during restructure. As a participant said, *it is clear that it is going to be changed. But I don't know if I have the skills* (University A). In addition, the majority of participants stated that a number of supervisors were not equipped with appropriate knowledge and skills to provide constructive support to their staff during restructure. Therefore, relevant on-the-job management training is needed, which is especially important for staff in management positions. This view is supported in the literature, which argues that a better informed manager builds a better team with greater job security because it increases morale (Volkwein & Zhou 2003) and productivity (Boedker, Vidgen, Meagher, Cugin, Mouritsen & Runnalls 2011; Fiorelli & Margolis 1993). Hence, it is crucial for direct supervisors to provide appropriate support to help reduce the level of stress at work (Rosser 1999; Solomon 1998).

Many participants felt frustrated at work because of a bad working relationship with their supervisor. Some voiced their anger at their supervisor claiming most of the credit at work. Some participants felt their supervisor was insensitive in handling issues because he or she lacked people skills. One participant stated that in one of the restructured faculties, a supervisor in one unit created a misperception of herself when recruiting a new staff member due to a lack of communication. It left her team misunderstanding her decision and becoming angry with her. Although her team did find out the truth at the end, her actions had damaged a number of work relationships. A number of participants commented that part of the problem was a mismatch of working styles between supervisors and subordinates, a view also supported by the literature (Rosser 1999). In addition, the expectations of supervisor and subordinate of each other was one of many factors that contributed to the difficulties in workplace relationships (Rosser 1999). All participants agreed that micro-management would not help to improve their day-to-day work. Echoing the views expressed in Dobson (2000), a few participants commented that some senior academics had no practical managerial experience or understanding of the administrative workings of universities.

*my boss leaves everything to the last minutes so we are under enormous amount of pressure that coming up to a deadline. Where you just really have to take a deep breath that today is going to be terrible so how am I going to best manage this. .... I am working with someone has a very different working style from what I do. It generates a huge amount of pressure on people that work for ... (MFAS, University A)*

*My professional development, my study and my personal research all those stuffs that's all because of self-motivation. I told my manager that this is what I need to do. And they try to send me off to all sorts of conferences and useless trainings. (MFAS, University A)*



### ***Identification of major sources of support during restructure***

Four types of support group during restructure were identified where MFAS received assistance and help. These were their immediate peers, family members, the union and on rare occasions, their direct supervisor. Participants stated that they often received support from their colleagues, either at work or outside. The support ranged from advice to emotional support. The peer support was provided in different forms: having lunch together, meeting for a coffee break, attending restructure forums together, taking small breaks throughout the day, having a small chat in the staff meeting room, and giving a small gift to each other such as a flower, cake or thankyou card. This signified the importance and the value of networking within an organisation for MFAS.

All participants had different self-regulatory systems to help themselves to try to deal with their unknown future: *I ground myself on it and I find myself. I tried to maintain things on guide. It's just the way I am.* Each individual developed different mechanisms for coping with tension and stress during restructure, but some felt there was *not much I can do; I try to make the best out of it; I will go if there is another change.* Due to the situations in their workplaces, the polarisation of different political groups portended an instability that would affect the way in which individuals constructed their identity at work. It is also mentioned by Volkwein and Zhou (2003) that “personal problems (such as health, finance) influence one’s perceptions of many aspects in work: job stress and pressure, job insecurity, inadequate facilities and funding, and, especially, interpersonal conflict” (p.162). *I was so angry that I could ....* (MFAS, University A). Similarly, when individuals could not foresee their future even the best working relationship would fracture or weaken in an unstable workplace (Volkwein & Zhou 2003). Therefore, it is crucial for management to understand the value of rewarding staff appropriately during restructure since would help individuals to cope with their stress at work.

*We need balance in our lives and deserve to be treated every once in a while for doing a good job in these uncertain times. There is no harm in treating us every once in a while. We should be encouraged being here! Like sending a personal thank-you email or giving a note to make someone feels good – it's free! Letting someone to have a longer lunch break after a hard work goes a long way! The*



*cost to these is bare minimum compare to what management has spent on hiring consultants! (MFAS, University A)*

*...looking back there was a series of moments that I had to hide my emotion after each interview, data analysis, and writing. I stepped into a 'work mode' after immersing myself in the researched subjects. Being a supervisor, I too feel I have to support my staff by maintaining a positive role to help them coping with the restructure. (Researcher's reflections)*

One of the many challenges facing MFAS, who are the gatekeepers of the units for which they have responsibility, was to implement and communicate potentially problematic objectives, intentions or decisions from management to staff. Some participants pointed out that a gatekeeper of the workplace would usually get the blame for almost all types of issues at work with a weak or indecisive leader. Sometimes, gatekeepers also turned to their peers for help when they felt frustrated. It seemed that some workplaces were divided into supporters and opponents of management. A few participants stated that staff who initiated or implemented change were seen as enemy by others. Hence, some participants would relinquish their gatekeeper role to protect themselves. Although the study was about MFAS, a majority of participants commented that a number of academics had also distanced themselves from the workplace during restructure. The academics' offices were empty most of the time, people stopped socialising with each other, and they hardly attended meetings or university activities as summarised in the following statement: *academics come in to teach their classes then disappear. There is very little engagement with others* (MFAS, University A).

In the role of MFAS and in the context of coping with their working lives during restructure, a majority of participants dealt with different issues they experienced at work. This view is also expressed by Alvesson (2010), who says that the self-determination or self-categorisation of an individual is the main force that dictates an individual's action to help them cope with uncertainty. An important element in uncertain times was a positive communication between management and staff regularly. There are many changes in individuals' lives that may potentially cause different kinds and levels of stress. These changes take place both within and outside the context of individuals' working lives. As argued by Moreno (2001), when there are too many

changes they can prevent an individual from realising what is really happening in their lives.

### ***Work stress***

A few participants said they felt stress at work because of job insecurity. This is confirmed by Cummins (2011) and Volkwein & Zhou (2003) who also argue that an individual could lose a sense of belonging in today's society when they are faced with a potential job loss. Some participants mentioned that negative emotional reactions to social stress at work had undermined their health. Some felt miserable at work. Some felt they could not appreciate the basic things in life because of stress. One participant said *I am stuck in this restructure. I do not know when it will finish. I lost sleep at night* (University A). Most of the time, individuals were dealing with colleagues who could not handle their own pressure and then turned on them. The majority of participants considered the way management was paying lip-service to address problems had a destructive impact on staff morale. It also projected a negative impression of management among staff.

The point of a university is teaching, research and servicing the community, as stated by Chen (2007), requiring cooperation between academics and non-academics. Despite issues causing stress in restructuring, it should still be possible to lift morale and interest among staff through relevant organisational support and the use of proper communication channels when disseminating restructure messages to staff. Well-managed communication and timely support at work could provide help, as suggested in the literature (Boedker et al. 2011; Reissner 2010; Moreno 2001).

### ***Lack of trust***

All participants agreed that organisational restructure brought new approaches and new challenges in all aspects of the working lives of MFAS. There was a feeling of aversion towards management in general. Although the majority of participants were willing to comply with changes, some still distrusted any suggestions from management long after a restructure. Some felt their supervisor manipulated them in the change process.

According to participants, it was the lack of trust in management and the Human Resources Unit that participants became suspicious of almost all actions and communications from management and the Human Resources Unit. All participants reported that the Human Resources Unit did not provide relevant assistance in dealing with organisational restructure. However, only one faculty manager, who was responsible for conducting and implementing a merger of two faculties in University A, stated that the Human Resources Unit had provided help. Interestingly, the same faculty manager had a very strong view of University A, i.e. that *this university is more bureaucratic and less brave in its attempt to manage change than other organisations*. This very statement might be the reason why many long-standing, talented MFAS still continue to work in University A: *I have worked in a number of universities all over Australia and have been through many different major organisational restructures. This university (University A) is not that bad compared to others* (MFAS, University A). A majority of participants were very pleased with the support from the Union that *had supported MFAS to the end if a member needs help*.

Participants reported that there was covert distrust at work because of job insecurity among staff. It began with senior management and then spread to middle level managers. Finally, it propagated right through a workplace. At the end, trust had disappeared and been replaced with anger, frustration and despair. A number of participants were told *no one will lose their job*. Nevertheless, many staff lost their jobs including senior administrative staff and those conducting the restructure. Staff were assigned to other jobs and some resigned soon after.

A majority of participants commented that loyalty could not exist without trust: *I have no loyalty to senior management or management but I trust my peers* (MFAS, University A). As stated in the literature (Clark & Payne 1997; Mayer & Gavin 2005; Renzl 2008; Shaw 1997; Zeffane & Connell 2003), loyalty and trust are the core values that an organisation should create and maintain but these are not physical objects that an organisation can demand from its employees. It is the key to employee performance, and thus, the organisational performance. A majority of participants emphasised that the loss of trust in senior management occurred because of the way the restructure was conducted. After a series of restructures, it appeared that there was a sense of reluctance to disclose their true feelings to management or some colleagues. With a sense of

distrust and a fear of management among staff in the workplace, staff hesitated to provide 'honest' suggestions due to their experience with the questionable intentions and the ever-changing management directions.

**Interview Question 8:**

*Consider all the restructures/changes in your workplace; have you noticed any changes within your workplace and between departments?*

This question attempted to identify the types of changes taking place in the workplace according to MFAS. It was expected participants might have different views of the types of changes given their working relationship with their work colleagues, either at work or outside. Some participants described their workplace as *a dysfunctional family with many interpersonal dynamics and it is quite stressful* after restructure. A majority of participants stated that the impact of the fear of losing their job kept them from really expressing constructive and honest opinions, a view supported in the literature (Volkwein & Zhou 2003). In some cases, staff might express a strong feeling of displeasure and display hostility towards others in their dealing with students or with each other. These included crying at work, yelling at work, clamour with their supports in meetings and arguing with colleagues. Trivial matters became significant during restructure.

As part of the restructure, in time of uncertainty, a general impression of management was they were bottom line focused and thus on reducing the number of MFAS. *How can we totalise different tasks and positions into a fewer positions* was the comment made in a financial meeting by senior management. Some participants stated that management should concentrate on identifying the gap between the current abilities and skills of employees and the desirable ones. Understandably, rearranging jobs and physical locations for staff during restructure was confrontational and complex. Often, as also stated in the literature (Bolman & Deal 2011), restructure is an obvious political ploy for management to exercise their power to make a mark.

***Problems with change processes***

From the participants' perspective, both the Human Resources Unit and senior management should take full responsibility of the planning and implementation of an

organisational restructure. There was no apparent cost savings after restructure, as stated by faculty managers. In the eyes of the participants, it seemed that management lacked clarity in defining who did what or knew what they were doing. The negative comments covered five areas: 1) the way change process was conducted, 2) planning of staff development and how creating opportunities was carried out, 3) lack of succession planning, 4) management of well-being of staff, and 5) operational issues. A manageable change process required a delicate balance from management between 'being honest' and 'being reasonably transparent'.

In terms of managing the change process, staff commented that there was either lack of consultation or too many consultations with no practical outcome. The change process was rated appalling, with many unrealistic stories 'sold' to staff before change, during change and after change. A few of the participants, from both universities, mentioned there was *inappropriate use of restructure with a hidden agenda*. In terms of staff development and opportunity, there was a lack of long-term planning concerning training or keeping staff, with up-to-date knowledge of how to deal with specific systems in different workplaces. All participants agreed that management actions should be consistent with organisational values and missions. The action should have a clear direction to help gatekeepers carry out their role.

Succession planning was almost non-existent, with management too focused on personality and dominated by political agendas according to a majority of participants. Many saw their supposedly new job as a dead-end job after restructure. There was no organisational support for managing employee well-being, the latter being a complete disaster according to the majority of participants. A number of MFAS resigned after being told their jobs were abolished but that they could apply for a less challenging post, a completely different job or a job at a lower level. In some workplaces, the feeling of not being respected had caused some staff to resign. Some participants felt being under-utilised as they worked in a mundane job after the change. This perspective is also supported by Volkwein and Zhou (2003).

Another issue was staff being paid different salaries for jobs with different titles yet who were doing the same type of job in the same work group. In addition, some managers were seen to be inflexible by refusing requests to job-share to assist

employees (especially female staff with children or elderly at home) to succeed at work and in their personal lives irrespective of the promotion of a work-life balance. The poorly handled change process and the lack of concern shown by management affected the self-esteem of MFAS, a view supported by Reissner (2010), as well as their health, a view supported in Sverke, Hellgren and Naswall (2002). Some MFAS lost sleep for a long period.

The following problems during restructure were highlighted in the interviews: amount of time spent on excessive paperwork, lack of procedure in consultation, pressure to apply for a reclassified job when an individual felt they were compelled to perform well at work and learnt new tasks or they would not have a job, underequipped working environment, e.g. temporary offices when new offices were being built or old offices were under refurbishment. At times when an individual was unsure about their future, stress might strain interpersonal relations in a toxic work environment (Volkwein & Zhou 2003). Similarly, the boundary between work and home was becoming blurred (Watson 2008). As an individual narrates the construction of their identity(ies) during restructuring, not everyone can control their feelings or think rationally at work or in their personal life. It is important for management to understand that the most valuable asset of an organisation is a stable workforce with loyal, committed, talented staff (Ramlall 2006), therefore, a system for managing well-being should be part of the change management process. The following statement sums up the feelings of participants in a badly managed restructure: *instead of living in hope that tomorrow will be better, I live in stress and intimidation every day in my workplace. I lost hope with the restructure. I cried at nights.* (MFAS, University A)

Although various problems associated with organisational restructure were mentioned in the interview, the majority of participants said that they viewed the change as an opportunity and a chance for changing their careers. Participants thought the following reasons were legitimate ones for bringing about change: to prevent an organisation from being static, to adopt a new approach at work, to create a new direction for a university and to create new job opportunities. Nevertheless, all participants agreed that it was also important to understand *the needs of staff at the coalface.*

*I feel others know more about what is going on about me, more than I know of my future and situation. I feel like an alien that is very unstable. (MFAS, University B)*

## **Chapter Summary**

This chapter reported the findings in response to Interview Questions 5-8 asked as part of a series of qualitative interviews conducted in two Australian public universities which investigated the impact of organisational restructuring on the working lives of MFAS during restructure.

There were similar responses from both universities to the effect that MFAS who had extensive relevant administrative experience felt that an excessive level of bureaucratic approval processes had made their job difficult after restructure. Participants from both universities shared similar experiences of difficult days at work that included difficulties with managing people, continuous interruptions, unrealistic deadlines, poor work relationships, excessive workload, communicating jargon with implicit meanings, inflexible bureaucratic procedures, lack of relevant information, isolation and working with either out of date or malfunctioning equipment. The physical location of staff and their supervisors had the potential to create isolation between them in situations where they were located on different floors, different buildings or different campuses in both universities. The noise of open-plan offices also contributed to situations where MFAS had difficulties due to a lack of suitable spaces to work on confidential matters. A number of MFAS resigned from both universities after being told their jobs were abolished but that they could apply for a less challenging post, a completely different job or a job at a lower level.

The “F” word was used at University A in the interview when participants reported on the level of hostility at work. There was crying at work, and yelling at work in University A, and trivial matters were made more significant during restructure in University A. However, because of the accessibility of staff in University B, participants from University B did not report these types of issues, though this is considered to be an artefact, as discussed in Chapter 4, of difference in the people who

were interviewed at University A and University B, not because these types of issues did not arise at University B.

Issues of staff being paid different salaries for jobs with different titles but doing similar work in the same work group, and of having supervisors who were seen as inflexible for their unwillingness to support practices such as job sharing did arise at both universities. Likewise, some academics in some faculties in both universities would be less compliant with university rules and policies. Participants from both universities mentioned there was *inappropriate use of restructure with hidden agenda*.

In both cases, the findings demonstrate that certain specific skills are required to perform the type of work that MFAS do, skills that they have acquired in the process of obtaining formal qualifications. It is the dedication, the professionalism and the values that MFAS bring with them to their work that make the job a profession. The four sources of support that MFAS in need of help turn to are peers, family members, the Union and the direct supervisor. It is clear that the relationship between MFAS and their direct supervisor has a significant bearing on the way MFAS feel about their working lives (Mayer & Gavin 2005). There is significant value in networking for MFAS when it comes to managing their day-to-day life during restructure. The lack of trust in (senior) management is clearly shown in the result. However, there seems to have been less distrust of supervisors in University B, apparently because several participants are recruited after the organisational restructures had taken place. The implications for the construction of identities of MFAS during restructure will be reported in the next chapter.



## Chapter 6

### Construction of Identity of MFAS During Restructure

The important thing is not to stop questioning.

Albert Einstein

As mentioned in Chapters 4 and 5, the findings were based on the participants' recollections of their experiences and feelings during restructure as voiced in the interviews, some of which were presented as quotations. I feel obliged to allow readers to make sense of the participants' stories. I will present an academic interpretation of the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5 in this chapter and my conclusions in Chapter 7.

*This study has challenged my perception of my job, ethics, common sense and rational thinking and led me to start appreciating the views of others via a snapshot of their stories. (Researcher's reflections)*

In Chapter 5, I reported the findings in respect of Research Question 2 regarding the demands of key stakeholders on the working lives of MFAS during restructure: *How do MFAS resolve the demands of key stakeholders, students, academics, other administrative staff and the public, in the current changing work environment?* Although peer support was the main source of support for MFAS in need of emotional and immediate help, the role of their direct supervisor was a significant factor in determining whether their work experience was a positive or negative one, particularly during restructure. The behaviour of the supervisor had a direct influence on whether MFAS perceived themselves to be valued or supported, and thus, their performance, as stated in the literature (Mayer & Gavin 2005). It was expected that their direct supervisor would take an active role in providing constructive feedback as part of their role, i.e. the supervisor's role. Secondly, the issue of job stereotypes played an important part in the relationships between MFAS and supervisor, and with management. Formal qualifications were becoming part of the essential criteria in some MFAS positions. Often certain task-specific skills were obtained from a formal qualification. Organisations should understand that their most valuable asset is their stable, talented, committed employees (Ramlall 2006). Therefore, it is important for

management to listen to employees' opinions and be concerned with employee well-being. Finally, loyalty and trust are subjective elements of an individual over which organisations have no control. This perspective is also supported in the literature (Clark & Payne 1997; Renzl 2008; Zeffane & Connell 2003).

Self-differentiation within an individual exists among all individuals. To develop the notion of an individual's construction of meaning in a hierarchical society, it is important to account for an individual's actions within a social position and their role in a collective context (Patton 1980). Life is not just about 'doing', it is also about 'being'. However, it is easy to forget the 'being' when individuals experience too many changes all at once (Moreno 2001).

To help understand how MFAS create meanings and construct their identities during restructure, this chapter presents the findings in respect of Research Question 3, *How do MFAS perceive their profession and construct meaning?* (Interview Questions 9–14).

*There are times when we need to move forward or take a risk in the hope of a favourable outcome. The truth is that 'the hope of a favourable outcome' may not exist in reality. Individuals need to take control of their situations, make the best out of it for themselves, and be aware of the politics in the workplace.*  
(Researcher's reflections)

I will describe the findings with regard to Research Question 3 in the next section.

## **Relevance of Today's Administrative Work**

Today, to take on an administrative job requires good organisational skills, excellent time management skills, strong analytical skills, great people management skills, creative ability with lateral thinking; in addition, some positions require a university degree as stated in many universities' recruitment selection criteria (see Appendix 8) (The Secretary of State for Education and Skills 2003). However, there has been only limited research done on administrative staff, especially MFAS. Some university employees seem to have a general perception that administrative work is similar to secretarial work and that thus those individuals carrying out administrative work are

either not smart or do not hold a degree/diploma of any kind other than a Higher School Certificate (HSC). The following were the views expressed by several participants (University A) in the interview: *I work with the person not just the request. What he hasn't yet understood is that I need to gather correct information to work with him to solve his problem; just because I work in administration doesn't mean I am stupid.* Thus, it is important to hear the 'voice' of MFAS.

From a financial, training and opportunity cost perspective, it is comparatively more expensive to recruit and train new committed, talented staff than retaining current loyal, committed, talented staff. With 85 per cent of participants having a formal qualification and 75 per cent having remained in the sector for more than four years, it is worthwhile to understand how to improve the quality of work life of MFAS to retain committed, talented MFAS.

*The level of demeaning behaviours at work intensified so do the levels of stress and demoralisation. It stopped me from working and from thinking straight when re-reading the transcripts and reflecting on my workplace. (Researcher's reflections)*

#### **Interview Question 9:**

*What do you like about your job?*

This question aimed to find out the key attraction to MFAS for staying in their jobs. The purpose was to retain committed, loyal, talented MFAS by understanding the part of their job that they liked, plus their commitment and loyalty to their workplace. Some participants *love working in the university*. Some love the work-life balance policies in the university sector as well as the lifestyle. However, in reality, the implementation of work-life balance and the flexibility of taking leave were inconsistent across different workplaces. A participant, a migrant from Asia, complained that despite having given more than one month's notice of taking leave to participate in a culture-specific event, the request was denied by his direct supervisor. He was also threatened with losing his job if he reported the incident. At the end, the staff member resigned to participate in a culturally significant event. He was later offered a job in the same faculty after management became aware of the incident.

Remarkably, some participants love the bureaucracy. Some participants are going through their career transition period. Finally, a number of participants reported that *the salary is not that bad* compared to the commercial sector. Overall, the participants stated that the key attractions for them of working in the university sector were the flexibility in taking leave, the practice of flexi time, the varieties of tasks in a job, the challenge of intellectual freedom, the lesser focus on profit than in the commercial sector and the social connection with the community.

*I push the boundaries in both personal and professional. I enjoy being here.*  
(MFAS, University B)

*I love learning.* (MFAS, University B)

*There are a lot of challenging tasks that I can do in my job.* (MFAS, University B)

#### **Interview Question 10:**

*What do you see as your contribution to your workplace / the organisation / the higher education sector?*

This question aimed to get MFAS to explore their perception of their own contribution in the workplace. The majority of participants saw their contributions as being to student learning, student development, student life and students' careers, as helping students to learn new knowledge, to think and to finish their degree. A number of participants mentioned that they felt it was rewarding to create a good learning environment for students and to help students solve their problems. Some saw working in the university sector as a way to contribute to society in a meaningful way. The majority of participants considered the voluntary work they did outside work also as a contribution.

*The students are the primary reason why we are here. They are the bottom line. Really, if they are not here we don't need to turn up to work.* (MFAS, University A)

**Interview Question 11:**

*What factors influenced how you see your contribution at work the most and why?*

The purpose of this question was to identify and understand factors that influenced the way MFAS see their contributions at work the most. The view that being valued and respected by their supervisor in the workplace in difficult times makes their working lives tolerable is supported by Gothey and Jones (1996). It made an individual felt they had made a difference and their efforts were worthwhile. The view that the direct supervisor has a significant impact on participants' perception of their performance is also supported in the literature (Mayer & Gavin 2005). A key element was the notion of being valued, respected and supported by their direct supervisor at work, as reported in Chapter 5. It was also pointed out repeatedly by a number of participants from both universities in the interview that having *worked for someone who values me and appreciates my contribution motivates me to stay*. Furthermore, being listened to in meetings and being valued by others in the workplace were also important to all participants, a view also supported by Reissner (2010). Being listened to and being valued had a substantial effect on how participants perceived their contributions, especially in the change process. Similarly, the negative comments or treatments from management also had a significant effect on how MFAS saw their contributions. The following comments had the worst effect on participants, especially during restructure: *written off from the book that their current jobs are no longer needed; easy to replace; support staff to work smarter with the help of technology; and who cares about them* (University A). After hearing the above comments, some participants had feelings of *who am I? I'm nobody!*

On the other hand, some participants had taken a different approach to coping with restructure, namely, being a *winner* in all decision making being their key performance indicator.

*It is important to me to do the right thing. Being a representative of professional staff in my faculty and a professional doctorate student, I see my contribution as practising fairness and raising issues that concern the working lives of MFAS, especially during restructure, I see that as part of my responsibilities and duties.*  
(Researcher's reflections)

**Interview Question 12:**

*Do you see your job / the administration as a profession and why?*

This question was aimed at hearing the opinions of participants regarding their job – a professional's work. A majority of participants viewed themselves as *middle man* who is committed to his or her workplace. Participants saw their occupation as a profession in terms of their formal qualifications and their dedication to their job.

*We have people who have quite specific technical skills. Uhm... And they are professionals. (MFAS, University A)*

*You know and you felt like you let each other down. And none of us would really want to do that. So they carried on with their restructure and we keep doing the job.... It was the professional responsibility. (MFAS, University A)*

*I care about the job, the students and also my colleagues. (MFAS, University A)*

The construction of a modern identity was heavily dependent on a job title, the relationship between subordinate and supervisor, and the individual's perception of their role. This perspective is supported by Watson (2008) who argues that the way an individual's view of themselves in a society order is influenced by where people find themselves. Similarly, the fragile identity of an individual is nothing more than an image manufactured in people's minds (Alvesson 2010; Gergen 1991; Whetten & Godfrey 1998). However, as stated in the literature (Gergen 1991), all things are subject to interpretation but which interpretation prevails at any given time is influenced by an individual's emotional receptiveness at the time but not by truth. Hence, not all things, including the 'truth', are true because everything is relative.

*Listening to the interviews, reading the transcriptions, I found myself seeking a sub-text more closely than I would normally do. It was because of the subject. I am one of the MFAS who has been working in a university for over 10 years. I see all jobs including those of MFAS as professional ones because of the specific skills required and the dedication staff bring to their job. (Researcher's reflections)*

## Identity of MFAS

This study aimed to investigate how MFAS constructed meanings in their work environment during organisational restructure. Alvesson et al. (2008) stated that identity gives us a sense of meaning in our lives and provides a sense of direction to individuals in life. Meaning is subjective, being affected by many factors, including individual character, organisational culture and sequences of events that may happen, both in a person's private life and at work. Significant events such as a major restructuring at work would have an impact on the construction of individual identity. Each event in an individual's life gives rise to perceptions and beliefs. In life, meanings evolve simply by what an individual 'sees', 'hears' and 'believes' in their surroundings whenever things happen (Gergen 1991). This is what makes an individual real, as does their identity. The construction of identity and its contributing factors are affected by society and the experience of the individual. An individual builds a relationship not only with people who work in the workplace; they also build a relationship with the workplace. This perspective is also supported in the literature (Alvesson et al. 2008; Gergen 1991; Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003; Whetten & Godfrey 1998).

On average, 30 per cent (7/24 hours) of our time is spent at work, and so it is difficult to separate in-work and off-work at the end of the working day. Home is not a physical place, rather it is where we are in ourselves. For this reason, the everyday workplace becomes a home to the individual. The emotions that an individual experiences at work travel with them after work. Obviously, some may expose themselves to the effects of political problems or the ripple of emotional turmoil at work more than others. The following paragraph, summing up my reflections on participant 'X' (University A), is sentimental but it is what people are:

*Having worked in his workplace for many years, like others, the workplace has become his second home. As he resolves the ineffective procedures of systems or identifies better solutions for customer services, he realises the only way to maintain self-respect and being of value is to keep his humour and to turn a blind eye occasionally. The despair of not being true to himself is so powerful in his tone of voice, in his words and body language. It would be ludicrous of me to suggest that it is possible to separate home and work. Home is where you are in yourself. (Researcher's reflections)*

Some participants looked at change as one of many projects in life that needed to be managed by themselves. A majority of participants agreed that it was very difficult for them to control something over which they did not have control. Sometimes, it was because of the lack of information or conflicting information from management regarding the restructuring process. It seemed an individual started to see what he or she believed was the truth and see what he or she wanted to see, as also stated in the literature (Gergen 1991). This is coloured by individual, personal, localised experience; as one participant (University A) said, *my problem was crying and being emotional. I told him that I was ready to work. It is important to me. It happened to me once. It is a level 5 job, the lowest job here but it is important to me.* When the change process was prolonged for more than was necessary, a number of participants (University A) commented: *I don't want to waste my time in this place. I don't care any more. Others can deal with the mess. It is not my job. I am not being appreciated.*

A number of participants stated that they underwent self-analysis in times of uncertainty. Some created reasons to justify the wrongdoings of management or senior management because it made them feel better, whereas others became bureaucrats in order to protect themselves during restructure. The multi-layered tensions at work had driven individuals to find ways to make sense of their working lives, dealing with uncertainty when they could not get support from the organisation. *I just have to move on; make the best of change; get on with life* (University A). Sometimes, they felt talking themselves up was one way to cope with their situations at work.

While some managers considered staff who shared their emotions with others at work were being unprofessional, this had its importance and purpose. This perspective is supported by Polivy (1998) who argues that by inhibiting the release of emotions, other emotional problems such as “distress, cognitive disruption, behavioural excess once the prohibition is temporarily lifted, and possible illness or disease in the long term” (p.199) would possibly occur. Similarly, an individual can only make sense of what takes place around them, their individual experience, based on the information they are given or to which they have access, a point supported by Sommer and Baumeister (1998). This indicates the importance of communicating appropriate information to staff at a level where an individual could make sense of it. Unfortunately, as the majority of participants commented, management was mainly concerned with the creation of a



glamorous and glossy corporate image. Little attention was paid to transforming the existing organisational culture where it could or would support a new structure.

## **Us and Them**

Speaking of their bad restructure experiences at work, a number of female participants raised the issue of being treated as personal assistants by some academics *because some academics don't have an EA or PA*. They felt uncomfortable because they *did not apply to be a personal assistant*. A few of the participants in University A stated that *there are people hired for that type of job. I am not a personal assistant*. In general, these comments mainly came from members of Gen Y or participants who were in management positions. A few of the participants, both male and female, who had experienced some sort of patronising attitude towards them at work publicly, felt degraded. These behaviours tended to be confined to some workplaces. Ironically, it seemed that most offenders who acted in a demeaning way towards MFAS were academics and female. A constant reminder of phrases from both universities such as *you are not important; I am not an admin so you do it for me; this is administrative work and I am an academic; one of the girls will fix it for you, ask the girls to do it; get me a cup of tea and what are you here for* were used in emails, conversations and informal meetings. This attitude created a negative effect on individuals.

In some workplaces, the continuous blaming of professional staff was becoming a ritual. Those who refused to comply with inappropriate orders or who stood up to such unacceptable behaviour were labelled *not cooperative, being difficult, trouble makers and not helpful*. These comments might have been made carelessly but they had a significant negative impact on the individual on the receiving end as well as others. In some of the worst situations, a number of academics refused to acknowledge an individual in public, such as passing him or her in the corridor or in a confined office space without acknowledgment. The bullying behaviour was openly accepted as appropriate in some workplaces with comments such as *if you can't cope with it, you can leave and maybe it is your fault, you are not an academic*.

Nevertheless, some participants felt they were valued by the academics in their workplace. Participants who worked in social science disciplines tended to have a good working relationship with the academics including participants who had experienced more than three organisational restructures. There is also a kind of neutrality in relation between academics and professional staff in some faculties. The problem of Us and Them does not exist in those workplaces. Overall, the key issue was about management who carried out a badly managed restructure. A majority of participants agreed the issue was created from the top. That staff emulate their leader's behaviour in what seems to be acceptable towards others is supported in the literature (Bolman & Deal 2011) and by MFAS.

University restructuring has become so ubiquitous that it is part of daily event in the eyes of participants. Often, the MFAS is the first to be discharged or replaced, especially the MFAS who seems to be in the firing line during restructure, as stated in the literature (Rosser 2000). It appears that the practice of putting an individual into a box based on their job has not changed. Given the skills shortage in the Australian labour market and a significantly high percentage of baby boomer in universities ready to retire (DEWR 2005, 2012), management should focus on retaining loyal, talented employees, including MFAS.

**Interview Question 13:**

*What aspects of your job would you prefer not to have to deal with and why?*

The question was designed to identify the part of the job that MFAS do not like. The social fabric of work is hardly about fun, instead it is focused on productivity and meeting performance indicators. It is crucial to design a job that motivates an individual at work, attracts them to apply and to stay. This perspective is supported in the literature (Ford, McLaughlin & Newstorm 2003; Karl & Peluchette 2006; Linstead 2004), which argues that it is an important aspect of an individual's work in a modern workforce. It is about allowing staff to have fun at work as an effective way of managing staff and thus increase productivity. When people can have fun at work, it motivates them to work harder and try harder. Almost all participants did not like to deal with unrealistic deadlines and excessive quantities of work. However, some male participants preferred not to deal with emotional issues. Participants loved dealing with students, the creativity side of their job, and making a difference, contributing to a shared common good.

#### **Interview Question 14:**

*What are the reasons to stay or leave the university or the HE sector, either before or after organisational restructure?*

An open and conclusive question was asked to understand what made an individual decide to stay or to leave their workplace, especially after experiencing a number of major organisational restructures. A majority of the participants had chosen to join the university workforce, either because they had heard about a job via word of mouth or they knew someone who worked in the university. It was its reputation as a workplace, of having a caring supervisor, of becoming part of an excellent team, and their personal view of what a university was about that drew them to join a particular faculty or a particular university. The salary was never the main attraction. Overall, a majority of participants from both universities were *less focused on profit-generating thinking* than on a *university [being] a good place to work* as stated above in this chapter.

There was a list of reasons why participants decided to stay in their workplace or to remain in the university sector. These reasons were internal job satisfaction, opportunity to teach and research, love of happy faces, i.e. students, better and secure employment in a bad economy, work-life balance, opportunity to take time off for community work, familiarity of the job, having good colleagues and challenging work. Strangely enough, some participants love the bureaucracy. Some take it as a transitional period in their career. Some felt they might have a chance to contribute to society and to students via decision-making.

*I think we are taking on more things of the real world, as you put it, in terms of how we plan the budget. I find it very exciting and that's why I am here. I find the opportunity to change ..... I have some sort of control having input into that.*  
(MFAS, University B)

However, a few of the participants decided to stay because of personal situations despite their experience of negative treatments in restructure. Personal situations such as age made some participants fear they might not be able to find another job, as reported in the 2012 Financial Service Council Report. It took about 52 weeks for anyone between 45 and 54 to find a job whereas it took an average of 75 weeks for those aged 55 and over according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (Lunn 2012). Some feared

having to learn new techniques and adapting to a new working environment. Some had financial constraints that prevented them from changing jobs. Some had to consider family factors in their decision whereas some were close to their retirement.

Their reasons for leaving included the repetitive and tedious nature of their job, bad morale in the workplace, incompetent supervisor and personal situation. A few participants wanted to enhance their knowledge and gain better qualifications, such as a higher degree in the area that interested them the most. Some participants were eager to leave a call centre type of work environment. It seemed that organisational restructure at the university was about directing resources to increase the number of academics with excellent research credentials and have the latest facilities, a point also made by Redman (2011), Tay (2011) and Trounson (2011). The focus of senior management is to *contain general support staff budget* at faculty level. MFAS are the key employee, the unsung professional, as stated in the literature (Rosser 2000), supporting research and teaching throughout different faculties.

Some participants, including faculty managers, said that they could not see the financial benefit of moving to centralisation although its benefit was widely publicised in different restructures. Some participants mentioned the justification for change was somehow *amended* in the process by management. Two participants in one of the newly merged faculties commented that a leader who refused to acknowledge an existing organisational culture decided to cancel a number of community services purely on the rationale of cost-cutting, without consultation. In some workplaces, there was continuous restructuring which imposed unsustainable stress on some participants, as expressed in *And at the moment, I feel pissed off* (MFAS, University A). After the restructures, there were still bad emotions and feelings in different workplaces, with resentment towards management and supervisors for the improperly handled change processes. *We lost the personal relationship in a large faculty* (University A). One of the key criticisms was directed at the hiring of external consultants to conduct change management, people who had insufficient understanding and limited knowledge of university business and / or the workplace. Their lack of knowledge of the existing organisational culture together with a commercial business mindset had led to poor or improper advice being given to management or senior management. A university has a

responsibility to society, especially in terms of teaching, research and community engagement (Chen 2007) to build a better nation.

Restructuring an organisation is not just a process of assigning staff to a specific number of desks or allocating a number of staff to a particular unit. It is about managing an experience that brings everyone together to create new ways of working to improve quality and increase productivity. It is about a relationship between staff, organisational culture, type of product and the mission of an organisation. These four variables are interrelated as pointed out in the literature (Bolman & Deal 2011). Furthermore, a restructure should clearly define existing and future problems in the workplace to bring about an improvement of the performance of employees and hence the overall organisational performance. A restructure needs to have a clear understanding of the type of staff the organisation needs, the goals the organisation wants to achieve, and the key factors that bring enjoyment at work to achieve a successful restructure, a point made by participants. Building supportive change among existing staff could avoid a rocky start and a lengthy recovery process when rebuilding a dysfunctional organisation or workplace (Bolman & Deal 2011).

## **Others**

There were a number of surprising outcomes of the interviews. First, University A was considered *less brave in change* but it was also considered by many others to be *not a bad place to work; I think University A is on the brink of doing something special, become more energetic*. University A has fewer problems with *Us and Them* but there were pockets of problems in different workplaces. University A is *a busy and exciting place to work* and some participants love its countryside campus for *its friendly and caring approach*. The most interesting observation was that *University A was a little bit of an underdog ... Got a little more drive and little bit of room to improve our reputation and build and grow*. However, University A *was not good at rolling out university-wide systems*. There was a lack of organisational support for coping with stress at work. It seemed that University A should improve their communication system instead of rolling out everything all at once without considering the staff. Some

participants stated that this was due to the cost-cutting of professional staff in a number of key services units.

Second, participants stated that one benefit of participating in the study was an opportunity to express their views to someone outside their work groups, to have someone listening to their stories, to have a chance to rethink their personal insights aired in the interview, and to examine their views beyond the immediate concerns after the interview. A few participants felt happier after the interview. Finally, as mentioned in Chapter 4, some participants were keen to see some practical results come out of the study.

As quoted at the opening of this chapter, Albert Einstein's statement underlined the necessity to 'question' the credibility and authenticity of things in life. Knowing what I know and experiencing what I experience, I could not overlook the experience that I have and the knowledge of others' experience. Their stories shaped my perception when I applied a rational analytical approach at work. I was not aware that the research experience had made me more susceptible to experiencing feelings and emotional influences; however, the experience had made me less rational and more sensitive. Sometimes I read more into what participants said than what was apparent. I became more sceptical about what was real and what was not real regarding the sentiments expressed towards management. It took me more than six months of self-analysis, reading my reflective journal, to realise what had happened in my feelings. Ryang (2000) stated that, "overemphasis on self-dissolution in the field might inadvertently lead to an implication of exoticism, of 'strange' and 'incomprehensible' culture that the field people are supposed to possess" (p.308).

## **Chapter Summary**

*Rewriting my understandings, assumptions, opinions, knowledge and perceptions of issues has taken me to a different mindset. This can only happen when I truly open myself to different interpretations and immerse myself in participants' stories. (Researcher's reflections)*

This chapter reported the findings of Interview Questions 9–14 of a series of qualitative interviews conducted in two Australian public universities that investigated the impact of organisational restructuring on the working lives of MFAS during restructure. The findings demonstrate that their stories are socially constructed on the basis of their experience in their workplaces; it is about reality in their working lives. It is what an individual believes in and what makes it important and significant to an individual, as argued by Gergen (1991). Their stories provide a snapshot of their working lives, showing how they dealt with pressure and stress under organisational restructure. Their stories give meaning to their identity and to others. Individuals who work as MFAS are not just working for the money; quite often this is not the main attraction. The majority of participants are motivated by other reasons, intrinsically or extrinsically, such as working with students and contributing to society.

At both universities, the implementation of work-life balance programs and the flexibility of arrangements for taking leave were inconsistent across different workplaces. From participants' perspective, the attraction of working in HE included the flexibility of leave arrangements, availability of flexi-time, the varieties in the tasks performed in a given job and the challenge of intellectual freedom, all with a lesser focus on profit and a greater connection with community than the commercial sector offers. Participants found their work associated with creating good learning environments, helping students solve their problems and helping students to learn and to develop their thinking to be rewarding.

The views expressed by direct supervisor has a significant impact on participants' perception of their performance at both universities, to the extent that participants who perceive themselves as valued by their supervisor will be more motivated to stay during and after restructure. Participants saw their occupation as a profession in terms of their formal qualifications and their dedication to their job.

There were similar reasons for participants who decided to stay after restructure because of personal situations in both universities. At the same time, some participants did choose to leave because of the repetitive and tedious nature of their job, bad morale in the workplace, incompetent supervisor, continuous restructuring and personal situations.

More participants from University A stated that they underwent episodes of self-analysis in times of uncertainty than from University B. Participants from University A also expressed more negative feelings than those from University B, especially in respect of bullying behaviours. As mentioned previously (see earlier in this chapter, also Chapter 4), these differences may be artefacts of the differences in the participants from each university rather than evidence that certain events did, or did not, occur. More of the participants from University A had experiences with amalgamation of faculties than did those from University B.

Tensions between academics and administrative staff were fewer at University A, particularly in the social science disciplines. However, these locations with less tension were also less brave in change in the sense that changes at University A tended to be of a less dramatic character than those at University B. Participants considered University A to be a good place to work, however, despite that it lacked organisational programs and support for coping with stress at work. In addition, University A was not good at rolling out university-wide systems.

A badly managed restructure together with an unsupportive supervisor are serious matters. It affects the way an individual feels at work and thus the construction of their identity. That feeling travels with them after work. The individual lives in a job because it is their life. Key to ensuring the organisation retains loyal, committed, talent staff is to get close to those who are affected by the restructure and to hear their concerns with sincerity. This study is about their stories. The impact of restructuring on an individual takes place at several levels. Staff who have colleagues who lost their jobs will also be affected. It is not an individual thing. It has a vibration effect on staff who are around. Working as MFAS is doing a professional job by virtue of the formal qualifications MFAS have and their dedication to their work.

The findings from Chapters 4, 5 and 6 are an interpretive account of the impact of organisational restructure on the working lives of MFAS. The structure of the three chapters allowed readers to form their opinions with limited academics interpretation as I feel I have an obligation to the participants and to a professional doctorate degree. I will start the discussion of these results in next chapter.



## Chapter 7

### Discussion and Conclusion

All things are subject to interpretation; whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is a function of power and not truth.

Friedrich Nietzsche

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of restructure on the working lives of MFAS and their construction of self-identity. The general research question, *What impacts are the major organisational changes having on the working lives of MFAS and on the way that they see themselves as part of the university?*, aimed to identify problems and concerns pertaining to the core elements of the working lives of MFAS and the construction of their identity during restructures. The three research questions to help answer the general research question are:

- 1) *a) What types of restructuring are MFAS experiencing?*  
*b) What is the nature of their day-to-day experiences in the current climate of change?*
- 2) *How do MFAS resolve the demands of key stakeholders in the current working environment?*
- 3) *How do MFAS perceive their professional life and construct meaning?*

Chapters 4, 5 and 6 respectively answer each of these research questions. Given my role as one of the MFAS and currently going through five years of organisational restructure, I am aware of the possibility that my own subjective view may play a role in the analysis. For these reasons, I felt compelled to provide greater transparency in reporting the results in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 with limited academic interpretation. The narratives of the participants were presented with their quotations to give readers an opportunity to experience the participants' journey, the working lives of MFAS during restructure, in the form of a snapshot of an individual's experience of organisational change. The 20 participants represented a wide range of jobs, educational qualifications, number of years of service in universities, and significant organisational restructures taking place at the time of the qualitative interview being conducted, as shown in Tables

4.1, 4.2 and 4.3. Participants were selected because they shared common characteristics: experience of restructures, working in faculties and their availability. Details of the research method and data analysis were discussed in Chapter 3.

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapters 4, 5 and 6 and links them to the literature. Five key themes pertaining to MFAS during restructure emerged: reconfiguration of workplace hierarchies, casualisation of working relationships and work context, managerial dexterity development, restructuring and employees' marginalisation, construction of identity and polarisation of individual perceptions of their identities. The focus of the discussion is the connexion between those themes and the construction of self-identity. This chapter will present the study conclusions and outline practical suggestions to improve the process of restructure, the limitations of the study and make recommendations for future research. All direct quotations from participants will be presented in italics with reference to their universities. As in previous chapters, any unattributed quotes and cases where the university is not specified in this chapter should be read as statements indicative of similar statements made by participants and from both universities.

## **Change**

Change is part of a process that one would experience at some point in one's working life (Beach & Reinhartz 2000). Restructures that took place in the university sector involved changes in policies, curriculum and courses accreditations, and were used as a 'quick fix' to achieve a balanced budget according to the literature (Harman 2003, chapter 1; Gladman 2007; Gornitzka & Larsen 2004; Leader 2006; Ketchell 2002; O'Keefe 2004; Rout 2007). Much of the literature (Leslie & Rhoades 1995; Ortmann & Squire 2000) was focused on economic rationalisation in relation to administrative costs and productivity efficiencies. Current emphases on restructure in the university sector have also arisen from the apparent need for bureaucratic standardisation, diversification at work, accountability of services, radical transparent decision makings, heterogeneity of research culture, redistribution of funding, introduction of new technologies, and optimisation of efficiency in core business processes (Coaldrake & Stedman 1999; Garvin 1993; Gumport 2000; West 2006). Organisational restructures currently taking

place across the Australian university sector include the following: La Trobe University (Trounson 2011), University of Melbourne (Perkins 2009; Redman 2011), Macquarie University (Lane 2011), University of Sydney (Tay 2011), Victoria University (Zavan 2012), Australian National University (Hare 2012), University of Canberra (Strachan 2012), University of Wollongong (Maiolo 2012), and Central Queensland University and the Queensland Institute of TAFE (Maiolo 2012).

Winefield et al. (2003) noted that increasing strain caused by restructures had a significant effect on employees' working lives. For example, 7 participants in University A stated that MFAS and academics experienced job confusion and stress when they dealt with a newly created student centre due to the rapid change of staff in the centre. Most of the work done in the workplace was due to the good relationships, goodwill and mutual understandings amongst existing staff. When most faculties reduced the number of MFAS, more administrative work was loaded onto academic staff. It re-emphasised the tension between academics and administrative staff. Some academics mentioned approaches whereby they would seek to ascertain the minimum acceptable level at which they could perform in terms of what they considered non-core activities (such as the non-academic work they often sought to delegate to administrative staff, see Chapter 2) and then tried to excel in activities that they considered core or enjoyable.

In the perception of most participants, however, situations such as these seemed not to be apparent to academic leaders to whom they reported *Just because you can see some of the things doesn't mean you understand everything* (MFAS, University A). A negative self-identity affects the overall organisational collective identities (Reissner 2010). It is in the interest of management to understand what underpins the construction of individuals' identities in organisational restructuring in order to improve organisational performance (Reissner 2010).

*My frustration is I don't know what I suppose to do in my job and management doesn't know what sort of work that I actually do!* (MFAS, University A)

## Reconfiguration of Workplace Hierarchies

The mid-level administrators were generally seen as an indirect cost in the university sector (Gornitzka & Larsen 2004). I was told by management that *we would need to get rid of administrative staff* (eight per cent of the overall budget) *so that academics can have more travel funding, teach less, and hire more academics* in preparing budget projections. Other writers (Johnsrud & Rosser 1999; Johnsrud, Heck & Rosser 2000; McInnis 1998; Rosser 2000, 2004; Whitchurch 2006, 2007, 2008) have touched on the subject of administrative staff, including mid-level staff in HE, but not to some depth with this group of staff (MFAS). The findings from the present study are largely consistent with, and expand upon, previous, limited studies which found that MFAS are considered dispensable under economic rationalism (Gornitzka & Larsen 2004) by university executive management.

Most participants said that they felt a series of consultations during these restructures were *a box ticking exercise*, especially when they were told *this is an academic decision and administrative staff are not part of it* in staff meetings. Remarkably, a few participants, particularly those who had no formal qualifications, supported the traditional hierarchical university structure that considers administrative staff as there to serve and to give limited advice. Werbel and Gilliland (1999) say that a “person-job fit occurs when applicants’ proficiencies are congruent with the job requirements” (p.210). This may be part of the reason why some participants assumed that staff with formal qualifications would not take up an administrative job, for example, one of administrative officer or executive assistant. This may explain the position of MFAS in the traditional hierarchical structure of a university. Some of the participants have master’s degrees and some even have doctorates. In some faculties, especially at University A, there are some MFAS have higher qualifications than the academics they work with. Despite 85 per cent of the participants having at least one tertiary qualification, it seemed the traditional view of MFAS in a highly bureaucratic institution played a part in the perception of the contributions of MFAS (Pickersgill et al. 1998; Whitchurch 2008) in that some female participants perceived they were treated as a secretary or clerk in many circumstances. *You are a good typist* (Lecturer, University A).

*Because you know they still use the word like secretary, 'ask my secretary' in email. We have to address that more than 3 times and you think that was inappropriate. (MFAS, honour's degree, University A)*

### **Casualisation of Working Relationships and Work Context**

Gabarro (1990, p.81) defined the working relationship as “an interpersonal relationship that is task-based, non-trivial, and of continuing duration”. Working relationships were built on trust among staff and relied upon an ongoing collaborative relationship between staff (Gabarro 1979). All participants reported that there was substantial change in working relationships in terms of attitude, dedication and commitment towards their work and colleagues within their faculties and that the change continued long after the restructure. Some participants reported that some staff became less helpful to others and some became more bureaucratic in their attitude. There was a loss of trust in management, and sometimes in their colleagues. Staff whom were instructed to merge their workplaces together and those who refused to believe management had had demeaning experiences of the change processes and had developed a distrusting attitude towards management. These effects were difficult for participants to bear, together with the stress caused by excessive gossip as rumours circulated throughout their workplaces. Volkwein and Zhou (2003) observed that people changed the way they behaved at work when faced with uncertainty about their future and with difficult challenges at work. This observation is consistent with the way in which the study participants behaved.

*... because of the first restructure is so overbearing, it has actually created a new mindset in many members of staff that if you like they are damaged by the restructure. ....So if management needs to change things, people are very suspicious of the change. .... It is harder now to get things in place. Because people have a suspicious of management and that is the consequence of inappropriate changes. (MFAS, University A)*

Tacit social knowledge is about “social interactions, social practices, and most generally, how a group or an institution gets things done” (Linde 2001, p.2). During restructure, in the process of gathering information from staff about the context in which the job is carried, both consultants and management were only focused on getting a snap-shot of *what* employees were doing and *when* employees carried out their tasks. Both groups had shown a lack of interest in understanding the connection between the job context information and the individual’s tacit social knowledge. Both management and consultants revealed their shallow view of job context information. It seemed that understanding how individuals made the decisions that they made were unimportant to management. This was of concern to the study participants.

*I have a position description but as you know a position description doesn't really match what everybody does. (MFAS, University B)*

Part of the job context “embeds the individual’s knowledge in a social network of co-workers and external parties” (Schmitt, Borzillo & Probst 2012, p.68). Language “is perhaps the most tacit form of tacit knowledge: one knows how to speak, but can not articulate how one does it, or the rules that govern language use” (Linde 2001, p.3). Often, consultants and sometimes even internal staff would miscommunicate or misunderstand an intended message. This added to the lack of understanding of management and consultants of job context information and the importance of the nature of the role of each employee in a complex organisational setting. “Group tacit social knowledge include the ways that teams and groups work together, how decision are made, how communications flow” (Linde 2001, p.3). A more complete approach to collecting job context information should include *what*, *how* and *why* of the nature of a job done by an employee.

*I need to use simple words to communicate to other staff and use jargons with my colleagues. Or you may end up explain it again and quite details. You know if you miss these details you will get an email back asking for it. (MFAS, University A)*

## **Managerial Dexterity Development**

One key emergent factor was Management Dexterity Development. In order to better manage the feelings of participants during restructure, both supervisors and management need to: 1) have the ability to involve staff in problem-solving discussions, 2) provide leadership through actions, and 3) have good knowledge about their staff. This finding is important because it raises questions about an underlying failure by management staff to understand and practise good management in managing change. Solomon's (1998) study on the moral psychology of business emphasised the importance of managerial dexterity: "good managers care for their employees, to be sure, but the current management literature more often treats 'caring' as an luxurious 'perk' for the employee but a dangerously expensive liability for the corporation" (p.517). One participant illustrated this point well: "*to be seen doing something right; a simple smile with sincerity and honesty in their comments to make people feel good; spend some time to listen to what I say and talk to me if they are really concerned about me*" (University A).

Participants spoke at length about the value and the importance of supervisors' demonstrating their caring support and their empathic abilities, and being attentive to staff when staff look distressed. Participants also mentioned that an ability to engage staff, to create a sense of connection with staff, to listen and to encourage staff to voice their constructive and / or non-constructive opinions were crucial during restructure because it gave management opportunities to understand and identify significant issues concerning employees' working lives. This perspective is supported by Boedker et al. (2011) who argue that high performance workplaces "are characterised by a culture and set of values where people welcome and seek to introduce change and innovation, where leaders care for their employees and foster collaboration, and where there is an ambition to deliver results and a focus on achieving goals" (p.8).

Some participants argued that a badly managed restructure caused a great deal of anxiety among staff who might experience self-doubt, or as Reissner (2010) put, staff might experience a "lower level of confidence, self-esteem and self-worth" (p.297). All the study participants reported that in their workplace the current management approach to restructure was an executive-led one. It was said in the interviews and shown in the supporting documents that there was inconsistent and non-transparent decision-making,

especially during restructure. Woodward and Hendry's (2004) say that, "poor managerial leadership can bring about additional pressure and, therefore, being sensitive to the coping problems of both managers and staff is an important aspect of change management" (p.158). Some academics expressed a belief that the way universities operated had changed, citing an early perspective that saw a university's role as being to meet the needs of government and society that has changed over time to a situation where university activities are largely "dictated by an elite that responds to pressures in accordance with their own interests". MFAS also expressed frustrations with the way in which departments were apparently structured to meet the needs of particular individuals.

*The whole point was to get the position description re-written and everyone to reapply again. That didn't happen. So the destructive force surfaced in one area and it affected other area in my faculty. Well, uhmm (long pause). I would say everyone was affected because of the way the department was evolved around some staff... arhhh lot of other department admin were under pressure .... the whole department was affected because it became so difficult to get things done.*  
(MFAS, University A)

### ***Crafting management and employee relationship***

Participants reported that due to a lack of support from management during restructure, their positive feelings at work gradually disappeared, and as a result, many started to disengage themselves at work, a development also noted in the literature (Zeffane & Connell 2003). As mentioned in the Section 'Casualisation of Working Relationships and Work Context' above, when both management and consultants ignored *why* MFAS carried out the tasks in the way they did, participants felt that they were being ignored and not valued. The questions of *what*, *how* and *why* of a job provide some parameters for the working lives of MFAS. These three questions provide management with the chance to identify and manage talent among their staff. It is important to understand *what* MFAS do at work, *how* MFAS do their work, and *why* MFAS take a given action in carrying out their job. The *what* and *how* provide the need and the reasons for the type of work that needs to be done in a workplace. However, both factors (*what* and



*how*) must concede to a number of other factors. These factors are organisational culture (Balthazard, Cooke & Potter 2006) and stage of individual career and continuing success of the workplace (Boedker et al. 2011). The *why* signifies the desire and the commitment of employees to handle the assigned tasks. As shown in the data collected for this study, illustrating the question *why* was key to the individual commitment, passion, interest and dedication of MFAS and their contribution to organisational performance.

Almost all participants, except one faculty manager in University A and one newly recruited MFAS in University B, had no trust in management and the Human Resources Department after their experience of restructure in their workplaces. On the contrary, despite the fact that the Union could not do more for its members in some situations, trust was built in unions after a number of change processes. Trust is what brings staff and supervisors together (Clark & Payne 1997; Mayer & Gavin 2005; Renzl 2008; Schmitt et al. 2012). “Once trust is violated, a ‘vicious cycle’ can ensure whereby trust becomes doubly difficult to establish” (Zeffane & Connell 2003, p.9). It was important for supervisors to actively involve their staff at all levels. This perspective is supported by Boedker et al. (2011, pp.8-9), arguing that managers should 1) spend more time and effort managing their people than leaders, 2) have clear values and “practice what they preach”, 3) give employees opportunities to lead work assignments and activities, 4) encourage employees’ development and learning, 5) welcome criticism and feedback as learning opportunities, 6) give increased recognition and acknowledgement to employees, 7) foster involvement and cooperation amongst employees, 8) have a clear vision and goals for the future, 9) are innovative and encourage employees to think about problems in new ways. The above comments were particularly relevant in this study where competent managers helped motivate employees better manage issues during restructure.

Many issues were raised about bad communication in the restructuring process. This highlighted the necessity of a well-managed change process, and well-organised communication channels for staff to express their opinions and feelings (Woodward & Hendry 2004).

### ***Communication during restructure***

The different interpretations of what is said or written between listener and word (Morson & Emerson 1990; Shotter 1999) forms an obstacle in communication, especially during restructure. In particular, some participants stated that there were important issues in their day-to-day working lives that were ignored by both management and consultants in communications. A poorly organised or inconsistent communication from supervisors or from management projected a non-trustworthy image of management themselves in restructure as reported by participants and supported in the literature (Zeffane & Connell 2003). Participants reported that the use of simplistic or pseudo-legitimate reasons was not convincing enough to motivate staff or rebuild poor work relationships between management and MFAS. An appropriate use of language was an important element in maintaining effective and ongoing communication during restructure. The choice of language must communicate the key message properly to the staff for whom it is intended. Stoltzfus, Stohl and Seibold (2011) stated that good communication mechanisms as well as good working relationships are the most important factors in well-planned change processes. Participants did agree that the consultation process was an organic one and that management did *need to make some tough decisions*. Yet, the impact of a badly managed organisational restructure has a terrible effect on all staff, a view supported in the literature (Reissner 2010). Furthermore, a toxic workplace culture would further destroy the working relationships especially during restructure, as pointed out by some participants.

*Usually, in the university, they don't inform people, they don't involve people. People feel very frustrated. People get scare and if you don't know you get more scare. So I think there are a lot of people are upset and it is very hard..... I think it is working for now as it settles and thing is not so bad. (MFAS, University A)*

### ***Role of supervisors***

*The important thing is having a good supervisor during change. (MFAS, University A)*

The role of supervisor is a significant factor in creating positive work relationships in a workplace (Johnsrud & Rosser 1999). As part of their role, supervisors need to help their staff to keep a sense of meaning in their work (Gothey & Jones 1996), to allow some fun at work (Ford, McLaughlan & Newstorm 2003; Linstead 2004) and to encourage staff to be creative and innovative (Rosser 2000), especially in high performance workplaces (Boedker et al. 2011). The participants in this study reported that the ability of supervisors to use proper language to communicate with staff on different occasions helped MFAS sustain their commitment, morale and professionalism at work. However, the role of supervisors in building and sustaining staff morale in a workplace becomes significant and more difficult in restructure (Rosser 2000).

During restructure on-going communication between supervisors and participants about daily operations and potential problems at work could help individuals to release some of their stress as reported by some participants. “Stress is conceptualized as a relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and as endangering well-being” (Folkman, Lazarus, Gruen & DeLongis 1986, p.572). Similarly, adequate support from supervisors and management was vital to MFAS. These supports included relevant work related training, suitable equipment for their duties, and appropriate advises on handling difficult situations.

MFAS who were supervisors found the change journey unpleasant because they were not well trained in some areas. One unanticipated aspect of the study was the lack of support and training in emotional management from participants who were supervisors. There was no clear guideline on how to handle emotionally charged employees nor was any mechanism in place to provide appropriate advice for supervisors when it was needed. In comparison, senior MFAS were less implicit compare to other MFAS in their criticism, and did feel they did not receive support from their supervisor. The complexity of dealing with emotions, feelings and personalities at work became more apparent in restructure. This is a major oversight in effective managers’ education, especially in leading and coping with restructure. Woodward and Hendry observed that “‘coping’ is proposed as the key to people maintaining well-being and satisfactory

performance” (2004, p.158). This leads to a consideration of management education for managers.

*I find it hard. I still work with academics but my supervisor is an admin whom doesn't understand what I do. It is a bit of conflict. Academics work in very different way. Admin works from 9 to 5 but with academics it could be any time like on the weekend for Monday morning. ... Very very frustrated with my supervisor. My supervisor doesn't understand I have to take work home. I feel very closely supervised. (MFAS, University A)*

### **Management education**

The expectation of managers to take reasonable steps to assist and provide support to the wellbeing of staff was mentioned most often by participants. There was no evidence in organisational restructure documents that proper care of MFAS took place. It was also evident in participants' interviews that management was constantly *talking about* their staff, and *talking at* their staff but rarely *talking to* their staff. Staff with a better understanding of people management will become more well-rounded managers or leaders (Davis & Landa 1999). The value of appropriate training in management education lies in its potential to improve an individual's ability to consider multiple perspectives in decision making. Universities should encourage and provide proper training to all staff, especially in the management area for managerial staff.

*My impression was my supervisor doesn't want people to think. ... just wants people to work. You know. Just processes paperwork. Just looks away. (MFAS, University A)*

### **Restructuring and Marginalisation of Employees**

Although this research was not designed to study change management itself, it was inevitably linked to employees' feelings of being marginalised in restructure as shown in the answers to Interview Questions 3-4. This is demonstrated in the literature (Shaw 1997) and was apparent in the data collected in this study. Cummins (2011) stated that,

“when people have insufficient income to defend themselves against ordinary sources of stress, they become vulnerable to low wellbeing” (p.56). The feeling of being marginalised in the change process was linked to the development of disengagement and indifference in the workplace.

The present study found that even years after a series of restructures, the resentment and distrust of management were evidenced in participants’ body language, including tone of voices and choice of words in the interview. Most of the participants felt they were marginalised by their supervisors and or by management. While discussions with MFAS took place, and these were documented in change processes, most participants commented that none of their concerns or recommendations were considered in final management decisions. Some felt they were treated differently compared to others who did not speak up during restructures. For example, the word *Restructure* was changed to *Review* in distributed documents that were available to staff and in emails, this was seen as an attempt to camouflage management’s real intentions. In speaking up against some management decisions, and outlining the timing of the change of the word, some MFAS felt they were treated somewhat aggressively in some meetings compared to others. Some participants felt they needed to behave like team players to keep their jobs; however, this did not equate to changing their perception of management or the change process.

*You know one thing that I had through all of the restructures. I found disappointing and insulting in a lot of ways. They always talk about consultation, and they always sort of saying you know we are having consultation meetings. ....So they come in and they tell you all the things that they are going to do and changes are going to happen, ask for feedback. And I remembered I was being asked how I would feel if this is happened. I was being very honest. Whether it was a perception or not or whether it was a reality, you might be heard but you were not really listen to. So you felt like you had been consulted on that day so they ticked off all the boxes as far as consultation process... And you really didn’t feel like you are being valued, and the answer that you were given, and you didn’t feel value in the attitude. (MFAS, University A)*

During the interviews, some participants recalled their negative feelings when they were told their existing job *no longer exists* and they were offered the opportunity to apply for lower level jobs or to do jobs which did not match their skills. A very important point was raised by some participants who felt they had been *written off the book*, i.e. that the jobs they had prior to restructure no longer existed, although there was still *work for them to do*. They feel they are doing a *dead end job* after restructure. Hence, it was important to have discussions with affected staff regarding their understanding of the definitions of meaningful and challenging jobs from the perspective of MFAS. The need to have the right people for the right job is key to a successful organisation (Anderson 2004; Eraut, Alderton, Cole & Senker 2002; Stevens & Burley 2003).

As mentioned in Chapter 5, in discussing the responses to Interview Questions 6 and 7, with all of the changes that took place during restructure, participants were uncertain about their roles and what the future held for them. Participants reported observing open criticism of supervisors and management being voiced in gatherings of MFAS and in formal meetings. This was of particular concern when participants felt the focus of the restructure was unclear, had a hidden agenda and that favouritism was being shown, because of the impact on their working life and on their ability to make sense of their work commitment. Furthermore, there was a lack of ongoing support shown by the university for MFAS, for example, to retrain or reskill throughout the restructure. Participants had also noted the lack of opportunity for career development in the university despite their formal educational qualifications and being judged competent in their jobs for more than five years.

For some participants, part of the reason for their decision to stay or to resign from their job were related to their supervisor or management. Their decisions were also influenced by their 'age', this having an implicit bearing on individuals' decision as noted in the literature (Branine & Glover 1997; Lyon & Pollard 1997; Wood, Wilkinson & Harcourt 2008). In some workplaces, regularly referring to MFAS under 40 as *young* and *the future of the organisation* projects an uneasy feeling among MFAS who are older than 40.

*when you thought of going out to different place to learn other organisation is a bit daunting. You know. People in my age don't tend to get jobs. Uhhh You got to be realistic about these things. (MFAS, University A)*

### **Construction of Identity and Polarisation of Individual Perception**

Alvesson et al. (2008) stated that “identity holds a vital key to understanding the complex, unfolding and dynamic relationship between self, work and organization” (p.8). In response to their self-identity in terms of their jobs, most participants considered the definition of a profession as being tied up with their dedication and the professionalism they brought to their job. Participants who had formal educational qualifications regarded their jobs as a profession based on their qualification(s) and the advice that they gave. Although their advice was generally sourced from their existing work experience, most participants reported that the process of gathering information to arrive at the advice was influenced by their formal qualification(s). Many participants said that they saw their occupation as a profession and were passionate about it. Participant X (University A) described how he was consulted by external organisations on a number of occasions because of his expertise in a particular field of study. The findings from this study suggested that the perceptions MFAS had of themselves affected the construction of their identity, a view also supported by Sommer & Baumeister (1998) who argue that, “people must find a way to make sense of events whose implications contracted their personal meanings” (p.144). Participants were able to differentiate their constructed self-identities between their job or profession as constituting their professional identity and being professional at work. An individual’s negative and positive work experiences have the most influence on developing his or her sense of belonging and respect and thus their own sense of identity during restructure.

*I just have to move on. Not dropping dead is the word. You just deal with it and move on as much as possible. (MFAS, University A)*

*In many days, I try to be positive. I try to see good side of things. I feel sick, down and depressed. When I get to that point, I can only do the essential but not my best. (MFAS, University A)*

### ***Construction of identity***

The construction of identity is central to the interpretation of meaning, which was found to be fragmented in some individuals (Hall 2000; Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003). Some participants reported that they experienced doubt as to their own self-worth when faced with uncertainty at work; in effect, the process of restructure affected their own process identity formation. The construction of anyone's identity is affected by many aspects of society and by the way in which an individual perceives himself or herself. According to social identity theory and self-categorisation theory (Henri Tajfel and John Turner in Alvesson et al. 2008), individuals are comprised of personal, social and collective identities (Alvesson et al. 2008; Blasi & Glodis 1995). Each identity (personal, social, collective) helps the individual to perceive and present himself or herself in a social context (Alvesson et al. 2008; Ashforth & Mael 1989). Hence, identity itself has a multiplicity of purposes that could be adopted in any situation (Hall 2000).

“Identity is an organic component of everyday language, orienting the layman's understanding of himself and of the people among whom he lives” (Blasi & Glodis 1995, p.428). However, making sense of one's environment at home, at work and as oneness in a specific situation is a complex process for any individual searching for an his or her sense of self through the most ordinary events of daily life (Sommer & Baumeister 1998). An individual decides his own identity but it is also affected by his relevant immediate group. Hall (2000) explained that, “because identities are constructed within, not outside, discourse, we need to understand them as produced in specific historical and institutional sites within specific discursive formations and practices, by specific enunciative strategies” (p.4).

Blasi and Glodis (1995) argue that, “the sense of self is presented as the central, defining dimension, without which it would be impossible to even speak of identity. In the present formulation, there is no identity, unless certain aspects of oneself are



selected as true and genuine” (p.429). What is missing is the interrelationship between oneness at work, at home and at the self in constructing self-identity during restructure. As Blasi and Glodis (1995) stated, “what stands out in people’s consciousness ... are the specific domains on which identity is built” (p.428).

*One of the reasons that people choose to work in university is that you have a bit of freedom to do the job that allow you to provide input into the system. (MFAS, University B)*

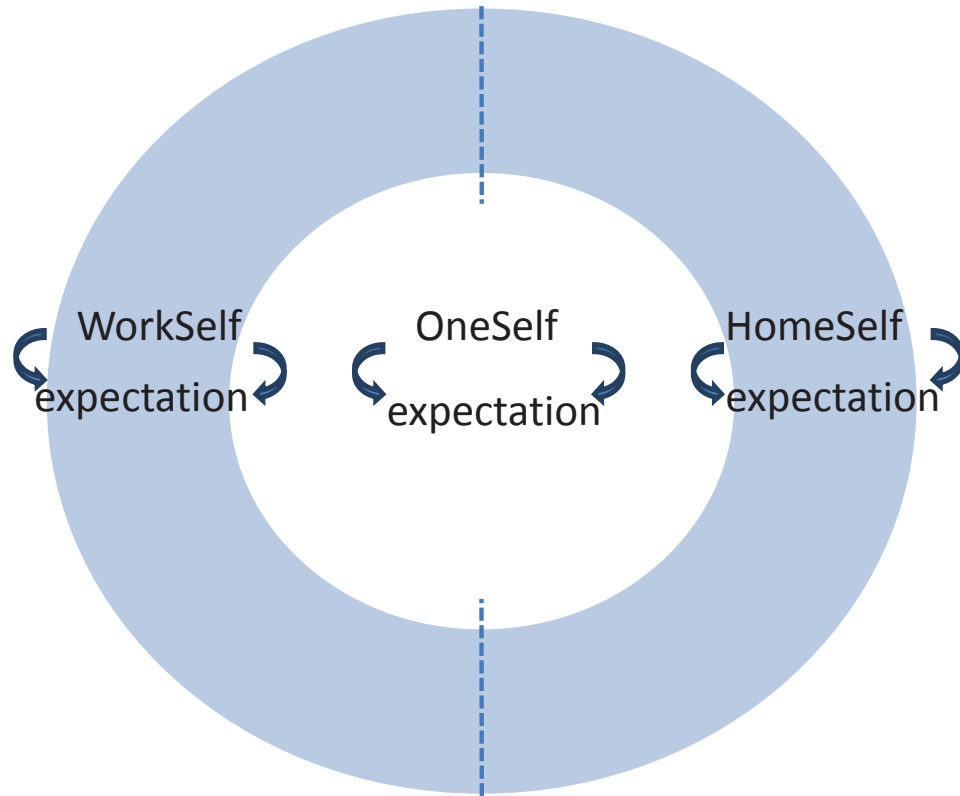
### ***Extending current individual identity theory: the polarisation of individual perception***

In a discussion of the concepts of identity and subjectivity, Woodward (1997) says “we experience our subjectivity in a social context where language and culture give meaning to our experience of ourselves and where we adopt an identity” (p.39). Thus, the subjectivity of an individual in a specific context is affected by individual perception hence the construction of self-identity is polarised. In restructure, the perception of each participant at work was significantly affected by how participant felt and how participant perceived their experience. This is supported by Sommer and Baumeister (1998) that identity was influenced by individual perceptions, roles and experiences.

*it changes because of new reporting and responsibility that I could take instead of asking somebody else. Because of the change, I can't make any decision I have to go higher up. ...I just have to cover myself. You can make the recommendation but you just need to get the confirmation back but we felt that the way we used to do thing has been taken away from another level of management. (MFAS, University A)*

Through participants’ narrative, individuals construct meaning that initiated the construction of self identities (Linde 1993 in Linde 2001). As such, I presented the construction of identity as Home-Self, Work-Self, and Oneness especially in restructure. These three domains of self are fundamental to self-identity. Underpinning all these propositions is the understanding that the different levels of needs for meaning in each domain could create conflict in other domains. As Sommer and Baumeister (1998)

stated, “individuals may wish to derogate rivals in efforts to make themselves feel better (self-worth), yet hesitate due to the potential loss of respect (value) in the eyes of others. No clear criteria exist for determining a priori which need will predominate when two or more needs for meaning conflict” (p.146). In any event, “the terms identity and subjectivity are occasionally used in ways which suggest that the terms are interchangeable” (Woodward 1997, p.39). However, it would not be easy for participants to adopt a different identity at any time in any situation especially during restructure. In fact, as stated by Alvesson (2003), individuals may not be clear of their construction of their identity. Therefore, participants may also not be able to mentally separate themselves from their work, their home and their oneness completely, each domain being subject to the way a participant constructed the meanings that underpinned their feelings, their beliefs and their worldviews. Hence, conflicts existed between each domain. Each of the domains interfered with the other domains, and projected outwards to the external world as shown below:



Factors affecting expectation in each domain (self):

1. build on life-experience (workself, homeself, oneseff);
2. subject's internalisation (values, beliefs, worldview), situational factors subject to oneseff;
3. elements of bureaucracy; and
4. sources of contradiction.

Figure 7.1: Construction of identity: Home-Self, Work-Self and Oneness

In the model shown in Figure 7.1, the construction of identity is made up of three domains where an individual may or may not be able to choose a congruous self to present in a given situation. In other words, each of the domains has a set of expectations within the specific self (oneness, home-self, work-self) of an individual in any given situation. In each assumed domain, at home, at work and being 'oneness', it has its differences in values, principles, standards, morals and beliefs that are subject to its existing surrounding environment. The socially constructed expectations, rules and values stopped individuals from being 'oneness'. As stated by Hall (2000), "there is the

production of self as an object in the world, the practices of self-constitution, recognition and reflection, the relation to the rule, alongside the scrupulous attention to normative regulation, and the constraints of the rules without which no ‘subjectification’ is produced” (p.6).

Often, individuals might have some control over their projected feelings, beliefs and worldviews when they decide to take on a particular role. In reality, our lives are bounded by the mental and psychological constraints that were socially constructed (Sveningsson & Alvesson 2003). Often, the needs for meanings would shape “the way people interpret individual events in their lives, and the systematic distortions or biases that shape autobiographical stories probably reflect” (p.159) the needs for meaning in objective goals and subjective fulfilments, efficacy and control, value justification and self-self (Baumeister 1991 in Sommer & Baumeister 1998).

*I have a few more years before I retire... I quite enjoy working here. I don't see a lot of people disengage at work. (MFAS, University A)*

Individuals also responded to socially constructed expectations of others when they were placed in situations where they might be faced with conflict (Alvesson et al. 2008, p.14). The issues of the conflict and the balance of work-self, home-self and oneness within the construction of identity were affected by a list of factors which interacted with each other (see Figure 7.1), as evidenced by the findings in this study. When individuals interacted with others at work or at home or being oneness at any given time, sometimes the influence came from other domains which were beyond the control of individuals.

Every identity has at its ‘margin’, an excess, something more. The unity, the internal homogeneity, which the term identity treats as foundational is not a natural, but a constructed form of closure, every identity naming as its necessary, even if silenced and unspoken other, that which it ‘lacks’ (Hall 2000, p.5).

### ***Influence of home-self in individual identity***

Home-self, perceptions of self as father, mother, daughter, son, wife, husband, grandparent, carer in relation to part of individual identity contexts, are constructed similarly. This dimension of identity is also dependent on social culture in terms of individual roles. Individuals learn to identify with the expectation of the society through experiences gained with society roles and articulated by the wider socially constructed environment and its culture (Hall 2000). When an individual constructs the home-self, like the work-self and oneself, he or she is also affected by the list of factors as shown in Figure 7.1 when he or she decides what feelings they have, and the significance and predominance of those feelings. Social situations are structured prescriptively as the expectation of the society and individuals' understanding of expectation. However, as different from the work-self and oneself, the identity of home-self is not positioned vis-à-vis its surroundings. There are emotive feelings connected to home-self – the family factor. A perception of self as a father or mother in home-self brings with it an expectation of certain responsibilities and perhaps duties that are not mobilised in other settings. More specifically, home-self is a concrete existence of an individual in a society that embeds with strong emotive feelings due to family ties. This adds a level of complexity in balancing the construction of individual identity as in work-self, home-self and oneself when one is under pressure, in situations such as those mentioned in the result chapters. The issue of individuals' health and mental state due to the job insecurity at work (Cummins 2011) during restructure would potentially be one of many deterrents on the relationship of home-self in family. Participants made statements like *'I have to look after my sick children at home too after work'*, and *'my brother asked me why I am so stressed and crying after work'*.

### ***Influence of oneness in individual identity***

Oneness was the core of an individual in terms of view and value as shown in Figure 7.1. Oneness affected the contribution and the definition of an identity on the home-self and work-self domains. Finding a balance between work-self and oneself during restructure was difficult and could be impossible. The coping ability of an individual is linked to the individual's "cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage the internal and external demands of the person-environment" (Folkman et al. 1986, p.572). An

individual's own perceptions of things, interpretations of events and constructions of meanings were not completely controllable by themselves. Individuals' views were interfered with by their perceptions of critical events in their lives (Sommer & Baumeister 1998). This included experiences at work, at home and as oneself. The balance within an individual under these three domains was not easily achieved especially when he or she was under pressure as mentioned in the result chapters.

*I never look at change as a problem unless there is no point. There must be a reason. There must be a value. If the value is for the students, I don't see how that's come through. (MFAS, University B)*

Lieberman (2005) noted that "our self-concept is really the product of social forces" (p.748). Hence, individuals were subconsciously changing their expectation and perception to align their needs and sometimes their wants in different situations at any given point of time. Part of the difficulty in dealing with restructure in the working lives of MFAS was the influence of an individual's own sense of values and the interferences between the three domains that the individual had chosen to present at work. People changed and then were fixated on fulfilling those needs or wants and they did something different each day because they were slightly different the next day due to an individual's natural adaptation. This was also due to the job insecurity that had affected individuals' health and mental state (Cummins 2011). Some participants' situations worsen in restructure. It seemed that some badly managed restructures had a destructive effect on individuals' health (Volkwein & Zhou 2003), and on the construction of an individual's identity, their morale and their commitment to their workplaces.

To some MFAS the problem was not about negotiating their identity within the boundaries of the traditional bureaucratic university structure, it was about being able to engage a positively constructed identity in response to an individual's core of oneness in this discourse. A historical perspective of MFAS as career professionals was a topic to be argued about even among MFAS themselves. As one of the interviewees commented, identity was easy to understand for each individual, unfortunately, each interviewee had their individual perspective on every issue. Each MFAS has his or her own perception of things that is also situational and in large part dependent upon the characteristics of their background and experience at work. Identity was simply what an

individual decided to take on at a given time and to place that commitment from an individual to a specific identity was not important (Blasi & Glodis 1995). A positively constructed identity was critical to the overall wellbeing of MFAS especially during restructure. Being valued as a unique individual at work contributed positively to the construction of staff's identity (Zeffane & Connell 2003).

*To me it wasn't a big deal, it is possible the lowest paid job in the faculty as a technical role. What's the drama? It is just a small thing. It is my life. And uhmm it was quite a disturbing time.* (MFAS, University A)

## **Reflecting Oneself**

As part of the research journey, it was vital to develop a capability for self-reflexivity and self-consciousness in understanding a discourse and its context. The importance of choosing the right arena was critical as part of a successful strategy. This study was a valuable learning experience where I had to step outside of my comfort zone to face potential unknown challenges to my personal beliefs, values, principles and perhaps standards.

The challenge here was to confine analysis to the research questions, to always be conscious of the importance of being objective and to be completely truthful on the issues which most concerned MFAS at work. To avoid over-immersion in the study, I adopted regular self-reflection and maintained a drive for self-awareness (Wellington & Sykes 2006). Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (2011) and Warren (2000) both emphasised the importance of being reflective of oneself to preserve ethnographic purity in writing to overcome this identities blur while conducting fieldwork. It was equally important to be honest with my own learning and understanding the way I learnt. I learnt to re-learn. As discussed in Cushla Kapitzke's paper (1998), on the way I learnt and re-organised what I had learnt. Reflexivity allows a "turning back of the experience of the individual upon himself, that the whole social process is thus brought into the experience of the individuals involved in it" (Mead, cited in Callero 2003, p.118).

Only by writing and reading my own reflective journal was I able to learn how to re-learn gradually via deconstruction and reconstruction of my perspective in the

construction of identity and understanding the way others constructed their meanings during restructure. It is difficult to imagine the impact of emotions on individuals in restructure until one experiences it oneself. When reflecting on the credibility and perception of what I considered as important I found it was no longer important. To the extent that being in the situation, and researching and understanding significant issues which affected the working lives of MFAS during restructure, it was more important for me as a supervisor to practise what I preach at work.

Thinking back to what I believed before this study was also surprising. Listening to others' observation of my beliefs was interesting also. The conversation stimulated my frame of reference for my own self-reflection and personal development. Reflective inquiry is a fluid and self-learning process that led to many questions and thinking that emerged on a daily basis (Johns 2009). Given that we are all participating in politics and decision making in our everyday lives, we have gradually increased our knowledge in the process of completing tasks, achieving goals or even accompanying an aspiration.

It was ironic that rational thinking did not prevent me from being distressed for one and a half years because of my manager's bullying. Although rational thinking helped me identifying ways to cope with it towards the end, the journey was not what I would expect if I had not experienced it myself. The rational thinking had not returned completely until a retired academic said, "*take on board the opinions of those you respect and leave the opinions of those who you don't respect or you don't even know*" (University A). The study has also taught me that being instrumental was only part of the equation. On reflecting on the whole experience in the study, I now appreciate the value and the importance of considering the welfare of others as a manager, to place an equal value on understanding *why* MFAS conducted themselves in a particular way at work in order to achieve better organisational performance. Organisations need staff who are efficient, caring and clearly understand the business. The more an individual feels that they are valued, the better they perform (Boedker et al. 2011). Allocating relevant resources to professional staff and academics is a necessity to help staff perform their jobs at the best. Yet, the successful organisation requires commitment from senior management.



This study has helped me to further understand the way I think, of who I am as a person in MFAS, as a researcher, as well as an individual. It also made me become more aware of the implication and the importance of a professional doctorate degree.

... it is the reflective practice processes and approaches that may be the most threatening, yet at the same time offer the greatest hope for growth, maturity and personal and professional maturity. (Christopher Johns 2009, p.2)

### **Summary of Findings**

The key findings of this research are closely linked to the five themes mentioned above: 1) reconfiguration of workplace hierarchies, 2) casualisation of working relationships, 3) managerial dexterity development, 4) restructuring and employees' marginalisation, and 5) construction of identity and polarisation of individual perception. The working relationship between direct supervisor and MFAS holds the key to the construction of the work identity of MFAS. The change management process not only affects the working lives of MFAS, but also the construction of individual identity during restructure. Identity understanding and workplace management are part of the requirements of a successful organisation (Alvesson et al. 2008). The results of the study provide evidence that the impact of restructure can significantly shape individuals' perceptions and expectations of their workplace, of their colleagues, and of their lives at home. The key finding of the study is that a negative, destructive restructure experience remains one of the defining factors of the perception by MFAS of their working lives after restructure.

### **Findings regarding Research Questions 1a and 1b**

*1 a) What types of restructuring are MFAS experiencing?*

*1b) What is the nature of their day-to-day experiences in the current climate of change?*

Answering Research Question 1a, *What types of restructuring are MFAS experiencing?*, set the boundaries for the rest of the study by determining restructuring in universities as the key experience of participants. The key question was how often restructure took place and what was their workplace experience during the change. Early in the research

process, it became clear there is still a perception among others that MFAS have poor educational qualifications in universities. The answer to Research Question 1b, “*What is the nature of their day-to-day experiences in the current climate of change?*”, yielded the information that different coping mechanisms were adapted by MFAS in dealing with organisational restructuring. The consultation process was seen as a box ticking exercise by most participants. It was more important for the individual to see the value of a job from their perspective than having just a job. It was clear from the study that all participants were supportive of and passionate about improving their workplace. It was the key factor keeping them in their workplace even after they had experienced several badly managed changes. Their passions were to improve the students’ experience and to support their colleagues.

### **Findings regarding Research Question 2**

*How do MFAS resolve the demands of key stakeholders in the current working environment?*

Answering Research Questions 1a and 1b set the boundaries for Research Question 2. This question identified a list of problems highlighted by participants as follows: the amount of time spent on excessive paperwork, the lack of procedure in consultation, the pressure to apply for reclassified jobs when an individual was compelled to perform well at existing work, learn new tasks, and working in an underequipped working environment. As individuals became unsure of their future, it induced excessive stress in work relationship with colleagues and or with the direct supervisor. Thus, the issues of well-being of MFAS at work and distrust in the workplace were important in organisational restructure. The key available support to MFAS was their peer support network where they could seek advice and could express their frustrations. Participants agreed that there should be legitimate reasons for change. In short, the work that MFAS do is a profession by virtue of their dedication to their work and their formal qualifications.

### **Findings regarding Research Question 3**

*How do MFAS perceive their professional life and construct meaning?*

The answers to Research Question 3 provided a snap-shot of the construction of self-identity by MFAS during organisational restructure. The combination of a badly managed restructure together with an unsupportive supervisor had a significant impact on their perception of their professional life and their construction of meaning at work and at multiple levels. A majority of MFAs are motivated to improve the students' learning experience and to contribute to society. Because of the ageing of the post-secondary education workforce and the impact of this on the future supply of skills, it is critical that management identify the skillsets required by university, to ensure university retain loyal, committed, talented staff, and to create a stable workforce from existing and future staff.

### **Conclusion**

*Sometimes senior management don't know anything below. All they see is smiling faces. It is up to the middle management to communicate. Sometime they don't communicate. They like to be seen as a problem solver, cover all the problems but bear in mind the senior management do like to know the problem. If no one tells them, they do regret making a mistake. (MFAS, University A)*

The previous section summarised the findings with regard to the three research questions which are that the construction of identity was influenced by the polarisation of individual perceptions. At the outset, this study aimed to better understand the working lives of MFAS and to contextualise how they construct their identity in the contemporary workplace during restructure. Snap-shots of participants' experiences during restructure were reported in Chapters 4, 5 and 6. The data retained its truthfulness and openness as participants' words were communicated with limited academic interpretation.

The study revealed that MFAS who were affected during the restructuring process noted that there was a change in trust and commitment in the workplace long after the restructure. Most of the participants related these to the working relationship with their

direct supervisors and some with senior management. Supervisors were in a position of authority and trust (Gothey & Jones 1996; Woodward & Hendry 2004). As noted in Boedker et al.'s (2011) report about high performance companies, and reading through the data collected for this study, confirmed the need for the development of management dexterity. Supervisors should be encouraged to develop management dexterity to be more effective at building and maintaining trust with their staff, to enhance employees' commitment to the workplace as part of HR practices to improve organisational performance.

For many participants, the lack of consultation with key stakeholders before change indicated that some decision makers might have lost sight of the business they are in: the students, its stakeholders, and the purpose of a university in the current economic environment (Ran & Golden 2011). A restructure with a single focus on efficiency and effectiveness on processes across the university created a narrow, single culture in the workplace. The notion projected by management of a reduced number of MFAS in faculties had put a tremendous strain on the remaining MFAS and academics. The issue of employee marginalisation in restructure seemed to explain the tension, the distrust and the feeling of being demeaned at work in the attitudes of MFAS towards certain management activities, as highlighted in the answers given in the interviews. A majority of participants spent significant amounts of effort and time in dealing with stress in a badly managed change process. Social peer support networks emerged as an important facility for MFAS. Although MFAS had sought help from their social peer support networks or "use[d] behaviour modification, career counselling, relaxation training ... to relieve their stress" (Furnham 2005, p.374), the stress still imposed the burden of having to cope and manage their day-to-day demands at work and / or at home on some participants. A majority of participants mentioned that the singular focus on the centralisation of administrative staff, from faculties to call centre style administrative support across universities, was a cause of disruption regarding issues such as staff retention, loss of corporate knowledge, excessive high workload on existing staff and excessive strain on supervisors.

*We don't have enough staff to keep up that slack anymore. The management knows about it. But they said we are lucky that we have as many staff as we got. Because it may be more cut. (MFAS, University A)*

As described above, in restructure not only were the affected departments struggling with the merger or the integration from multiple departments into one super department or vice versa, but also the affected staff, including MFAS and academics, were dealing with multiple issues. Issues included resource allocation, teaching program amendments, staff relocation and re-training, office politics while staff were still performing their day-to-day work and managing their own emotional turmoil. Certain events at work had strong emotional impacts and created stress for some participants for example, fear of uncertainty (Zeffane & Connell 2003), job insecurity, lack of clear communication and lack of trust in their supervisor and management during restructure. Thus, some resorted to self-questioning (Reissner 2010) and some started alienating management staff and even their colleagues, followed by distancing themselves from their workplace and / or their colleagues. Some of these disruptive behaviours reflected the badly managed restructures (Folger & Skarlicki 1999; Reissner 2010).

*The consequences of changes have left many members of staff quite bitter and that hinders everybody. That bitterness doesn't just get direct at management. Some individuals are worse than others. Some people are getting more affected. Some people expressed changes in different ways. One way that people express change is by constantly talking down the university or talking down their work or their workmates or talking down their bosses or whatever. Again, it becomes a ritual after a while. One of the worst. It spreads everywhere. (MFAS, University A)*

“Change does not happen because a university leader or committee asserts a new idea. It happens because it becomes operational, and it becomes operational because it is embraced by those that must carry it out” (Clark (1998) cited in Marginson & Considine 2000, p.240). During restructure, most of the work was completed because of the professionalism of MFAS and the good working relationship among staff. MFAS have a strong, direct working relationship with academics and the students in their faculty. MFAS have rich corporate knowledge of their faculty. Their commitment was to the job and the workplace. However, with insufficient MFAS in each faculty, MFAS were spending more time in dealing with people issues instead of focusing on providing

better services, which is where the focus should be according to the participants. The lack of organisational support and a badly managed restructure was destructive of the morale of both MFAS and academics in some faculties, resulting in increasing pressure on the remaining MFAS, academics and management in some workplaces.

As summarised in Chapter 6 summary, the relationship between academics and administrative staff were different in different faculties in both universities. That some participants felt they were valued by their academics in social science disciplines and in engineering disciplines in their respective universities. However, during restructure whether it was a major or a minor change, the adding of non-academics activities to academics and then shifting part or all of the non-academics activities to existing limited MFAS, it either created or added extra tension between academics and administrative staff when there was lack of organisational support in a university. Inappropriate behaviours, such as bullying and careless comments directed at some administrative staff were still existed in all workplaces, and that did add additional pressure that affected identity construction and the working lives of MFAS during restructure because of the profoundly negative affect these behaviours had on individuals.

Although self-identify is a small part in social identity study in the context of “value and emotional attachment” (Alvesson, Ashcraft & Thomas 2008, p.10), a better understanding of how individuals construct their self-identity in a workplace setting under restructure helps an organisation to conduct a better informed restructure. It is therefore worth considering changes in the construction of individual identity during restructure. The study makes a unique contribution to the development of individual identity construction theory by incorporating the interference of the three domains work-self, home-self and oneself during restructure. Each of the domains has different values, standards and beliefs that are socially constructed and are subject to its physical environment. It would not be easy for an individual to acquire the ability to change between work-self, home-self and oneself to suit the surroundings. As mentioned by Folkman et al. (1986), the coping ability of an individual in any situation is the combined efforts of cognitive skills and behaviours.

The integration of multiple workgroups with diverse organisational cultures, educational backgrounds, race, career progression and age profile required extra attention (Reissner 2010). As described in the previous two chapters, many participants commented that the loss of their faculty status affected their identity during restructure. A cultural change in the workplace should be an incremental change because people's fear of uncertainty and intensive change would more likely lead to uncertainty (Woodward & Hendry 2004). Policy and process had become more bureaucratic with standardisation such that fuzzy collegial discussions and decision making started to disappear within their faculty.

Finally, as mentioned above, the findings suggested that organisational restructure had not only had an impact on the working lives of MFAS, but it also went beyond the change process, and affected individuals' health and mental states (Cummins 2011). The key to a constructive restructure seems to be to maintain consistency and transparency in communication throughout the change process (Woodward & Hendry 2004; Stoltzfus et al. 2011). It is also important for a supervisor to understand the needs of their staff, and to empathise with their staff in restructure. As noted in Solomon (1998) and Zeffane and Connell (2003), it is far easier to obtain cooperation from staff if the majority of staff are supportive of the proposed decisions. A positively constructed identity is closely linked to being valued at work (Zeffane & Connell 2003). In fact, some participants recommended a regular review every couple of years to prevent workforce stagnation, to energise MFAS to owe and to build their professional knowledge, to improve productivity and to have fun at work. Closer integration between theory and practice "by understanding how firms can retain and avoid critical knowledge losses during employee downsizing (Schmitt et al. 2012, p.53) is important to all supervisors and to management to achieve organisational success.

*You need something to put your work and love in otherwise it is not worth it.  
Life and work are not about looking back, it is about looking forward!* (MFAS,  
University A)

## **Significance of Findings**

The findings contribute to the existing limited discussion in the literature of the working lives of MFAS during restructure, the perspective of MFAS of their job as a profession, the construction of individual identity with an emphasis on individual experience and organisational performance. Firstly, the value of this research lies in the context of increasing participants' awareness of their professionalism at work through their involvement in the current study. This provided the participants with validation of the relationship between employees and their organisations, showing that their professional responsibility makes a significant contribution to the student experience and to students' success. Their contributions are valuable – MFAS are not invisible employees.

Secondly, one of the key theoretical foundations for this study is individual identity. Individual identity as part of identity study has long been considered to have various impacts. There is a relative lack of exploration of the interrelated relationships between oneself, home-self and work-self in constructing self-identity in terms of an individual's expectations and their experience during restructure. The findings provide a greater understanding at individual-level meanings of individual identity construction and the impact of individual perception of both positive and negative work-related identities construction in organisational life in change management. This research offers insights into the construction of individual identity during restructure and the interrelated relationships between oneself, home-self and work-self. The discussion and conclusion provide challenges for the construction of individual identity during restructure. The findings of the study, in turn, contribute to this body of knowledge by incorporating the construction of individual identity with a focus on the individual experience “that people seek meaning in ordinary events along the same lines that they seek meaning in life generally” (Sommer & Baumeister 1998, p.143) to make sense of their individual experience.

Finally, the findings will help senior management and managers to improve the framework for the change process by better managing emotional issues among staff and implementing effective tools for managing employee relations. With a continuous focus on improving and maintaining a stable workforce and prioritising critical knowledge on different organisation levels to retain it, better human resource management of talent



will facilitate committed MFAS performing effectively to optimise organisational performance.

### **Limitations of the Study**

The findings of this study must be considered in the light of the limitations of the research. This study used the interview as a methodological approach. Many researchers have described a narrative case study method with interview, together with a reflective process such as keeping journals or diaries (Hastrup 1992). The study was context-bound and subject to the time lapse of participants' experience of their restructures. The findings of this study have confirmed the shortcomings of qualitative methods; they also supported their weaknesses and strengths, as noted by other researchers (Bryman 1984; Merriam 1998; Neuman 1997; Patton 1980). A comprehensive questionnaire study may have teased out more data. However, "life meaning is often represented and related in story form, research examining the construction of personal meaning from life events is primarily qualitative in nature" (Sommer & Baumeister 1998, p.145), thus confirming the value of a qualitative study for gaining an in-depth understanding of and better information about the working lives of MFAS in their construction of self-identity during restructure.

#### ***Limited to two institutions***

Much of the analysis and discussion is limited to two tertiary institutions and to study participants while the discussion of the analysis and results in the previous sections might suggest an expansion to include other institutions. As Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.124) stated, the transferability of findings from one study to a different context depends on the "similarity" between the two contexts. A 'thick' description of the research, of where it took place and its experience, were key "to allow the reader to gauge and assess the meanings attached to them" (Lewis & Ritchie 2003, p.268). The conclusion may be applicable to other universities but it is important to be conscious of historical, cultural and people factors.

### ***Researcher bias***

The researcher is one of the MFAS undergoing restructure; she held a mid-level position in a faculty, and has a number of formal educational qualifications, as detailed in Chapters 1 and 3. The researcher has an academic interest in studying this group, and she has been a casual academic for a number of years, teaching on a Master of Business Administration program. As an academic often rated by students within the top 20 in postgraduate teaching, the researcher understands the separation of researcher and subject in the research process and thus any potential bias was minimised in the study. A self-ethnography approach, via keeping a reflective journal and cross-referencing to field notes, a grounded theory approach to data analysis, and a deconstruction and reconstruction process of her identity helped in minimising the researcher's subjectivity.

### ***Self-reporting***

Due to the nature of the qualitative methodology used in this study, the delay between experiencing restructure and talking about it for this study may be a factor for some individuals when it came to recall their experience of restructure. Issues included participants attempting to make themselves less emotional, giving expressive answers without devoting much thought to the questions, and intentionally or unintentionally misrepresenting their experiences in the interview. As noted by Archer (2007), these stories are the perceptions of individuals but not an absolute truth. We can not know what individuals are thinking, only what they tell us they are thinking. However, storytelling provided individuals an opportunity to reflect on their personal experience and so "also convey the speaker's moral attitude towards these events" (Linde 2001, p.5) as part of the construction of individual identity (Linde 1993; Reissner 2010). As noted by others (Sommer & Baumeister 1998); the participants' feelings about particular events were not easily discarded and their experience would continue to stay with them.

## **Recommendations for Practice and Future Research**

This study was intended to find out what and how MFAS construct meanings at work during restructure. A gap in the literature showed the importance of looking at the shortcomings from a practical perspective with a view to suggesting a practical approach to management. The study developed and demonstrated a better understanding of the issue of polarisation of individual perceptions of the construction and the negotiation of individual identity in restructure. It is important in terms of creating an effective and constructive change management process and a more effective human resource management for managing talented, committed staff in order to improve organisational performance. A better understanding of the construction of employees' self-identity will help management to create a more effective way to develop organisational identity.

### ***Management interaction***

The findings of this research show that the implementation of appropriate management dexterity development for all management staff is important in the context of helping supervisors to connect with staff at work and to create a positive constructive work relationship, and of helping managers to become more competent in their roles. As shown in this study, a better understanding of the relationship between individuals' identity and their profession helps create meanings and sustain commitment from employees for an improved restructure. This is an organisational issue that "may jeopardise organisational efforts to create shared meanings, collective identities and a sustainable future" (Reissner 2010 p.297). It is also critical for management to develop an awareness of the contribution of a positive identity to the well-being of the individual at both an individual and an organisational level. Both Taylor (1983) and Schwarzer & Knoll (2003) emphasized the need of social network support in individual's positive coping mechanism. Hence, supervisors and management should encourage MFAS to participate in building a strong peer support network among MFAS.

### ***Engaging the workforce and communications***

It is concerning to note the tension between MFAS and supervisors and management and the distrust MFAS have for supervisors and management, especially during restructure. Therefore, it is vital to have clear and consistent communication throughout the restructure. Future organisational restructure should have clear goals and objectives that should be communicated to all staff in a timely manner. The process of decision-makings needs to be as consistent and transparent as possible.

### ***Retaining key intellectual assets***

With an aging workforce in HE, universities need to be in a better position to attract talented, committed staff to both administrative and academic roles from a limited, talented workforce in order to remain competitive. Employees who have high intellectual capital are scarce due to their high employability. Talented and committed staff have the relevant knowledge, experience, wisdom and ideas to solve complex business problems. MFAS who have an excellent understanding of the needs of clients should be part of restructuring committee to provide a better view of the administrative decision-making process.

### ***Extending the study to other universities***

At the outset, this study intended to question the working lives of MFAS and their construction of self-identity during restructure. The study has provided valuable insight into the lived experiences of MFAS during restructure, contributed to the study of self-identity, and posed a challenge to the general assumptions about the work of MFAS and their status as members of a profession. It is clear that there is a gap in data and literature, especially concerning MFAS, the closing of which would benefit from future research. The relationship between the inner feelings of MFAS and the construction of organisational identity is not yet fully understood. The relationship between MFAS and organisational identities during restructure may provide a practical perspective to help management accomplish the intended goals in restructure. In addition, a further investigation into the way individuals set priorities and into their commitment at work

would provide a better understanding of the relationship between job context information and individual commitment to achieve improved efficiency and effectiveness at work.

# Appendices

## Appendix 1: Cover Letter to Faculties

Dr Tony Holland  
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
PHONE: (02) 9514 3824  
FAX: (02) 9514 3811  
E-MAIL: [tony.holland@uts.edu.au](mailto:tony.holland@uts.edu.au)



University of Technology, Sydney  
P O Box 123  
Broadway NSW 2007  
Australia  
[www.uts.edu.au](http://www.uts.edu.au)

UTS CRICOS PROVIDER CODE 00099F

Dean's Unit  
University of Technology, Sydney  
Australia

To Whom It May Concern:

**Subject:** Permission to Conduct Research in your Faculty

**Research Title:** Impact of Organisational Restructuring on the working lives and identities of midlevel faculty-based administrative staff: A study of Australian universities

I am a Doctor of Education student in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science of University of Technology, Sydney. My supervisor is Dr Tony Holland in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science of University of Technology, Sydney. I am writing to seek your permission to conduct research in your faculty.

The purpose of the study is to undertake a qualitative study of how midlevel faculty-based administrators construct meaning and perceive their profession particularly in situations of organizational change. The rationale for this research is to defend the importance of talent management in recruitment and retaining committed, skilled employees under restructure for better staff retention and the working environment.

I will be commencing my research project in April 2009. This research project is estimated to be completed by April 2010. During this period of twelve months, I plan to carry out non-participant observation and interviews. In the non-participant observation I will attend meetings and will take notes for myself to understand how individual managers satisfy various requests within the overall framework that they work in and how individuals construct meaning via the normal processes of discussion, decision making, and planning. With reference to the note-taking, no university/faculty/name will be mentioned. In the interview, participants will be asked to answer questions related to the topic in audio taped interviews, and to reflect on the topic.

Please be assured that the Faculty will be informed of the exact date of my visits prior to my sitting in meetings. I also assure you that participants' confidentiality will be maintained at all times. All information collected as part of the study will be retained for seven years and the information will be stored in a locked filing cabinet to which only I have access. Any records containing personal information will remain confidential and no information that could lead to identification of any individual will be released. The identity of participants will be held in confidence as part of the procedure. All interviews will be recorded under codes and the code list will be locked away in my office. No identifying information about the participants will be used in any paper that may result from this research. Individual identity will be masked. No other organisation or person has rights of access to the data collected on field notes or tapes.

Participation in this research is totally voluntary and there is no obligation to participate. There will be no consequence to participants' employment either at present or in the future as a result of participating in the study. Individuals may withdraw from the research at anytime and their comments from the observation will be destroyed without any effect on their position. Individuals may amend their comments from the observation at a later date. Individuals will not be exposed to any physical or mental risks in participating in the research. Individuals will not suffer any adverse consequences as a result of participating in the research. Contact details of a staff counsellor will be provided if individuals feel distress during the interviews.

As part of the UTS Ethics approval process, I am seeking your permission to conduct research in your faculty. Your signature below indicates that I can conduct my research in your Faculty during the period April 2009 to April 2010. I have also attached a copy of the letter seeking approval for individual staff to participate as a courtesy (for their interest).

Consent

By signing below you indicate that you:

1. understand that confidentiality will be maintained and no identifying information will be released; and
2. give me permission to conduct research in your faculty.

Selection criteria of participants for interview in this research:

1. have experienced restructuring,
2. show ability to communicate to others,
3. direct knowledge of the restructuring,
4. accessible to the research student or the research supervisor and have personally agreed to be involved in the research
5. currently employed in the midlevel administrative scale (Level 6 to Level 10)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I trust that you will assist me in this study.

Your sincerely,

Stella Ng,  
Doctor of Education Student,  
Faculty of Arts and Social Science,  
University of Technology, Sydney,  
PO Box 123,  
Broadway 2007 NSW  
Australia.  
Contact number: 02 9514 3605  
[Stella.ng@uts.edu.au](mailto:Stella.ng@uts.edu.au)

Production Note:  
Signature removed prior to publication.

Dr Tony Holland,  
Supervisor,  
Faculty of Arts and Social Science,  
University of Technology, Sydney,  
PO Box 123,  
Broadway 2007 NSW  
Australia.  
Contact number: 02 9514 3824  
[Tony.holland@uts.edu.au](mailto:Tony.holland@uts.edu.au)

## Appendix 2: Consent Form – Interviews

Dr Tony Holland  
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
PHONE: (02) 9514 3824  
FAX: (02) 9514 3811  
E-MAIL: [tony.holland@uts.edu.au](mailto:tony.holland@uts.edu.au)



University of Technology, Sydney  
P O Box 123  
Broadway NSW 2007  
Australia  
[www.uts.edu.au](http://www.uts.edu.au)

UTS CRICOS PROVIDER CODE 00099F

### Consent Form – Interviews

Dear

As part of a Doctor of Education study at University of Technology, (UTS), Sydney, I am currently carrying out the research project **Impact of Organisational Restructuring on the working lives and identities of faculty-based midlevel administrative staff: A study of Australian universities**. My supervisor is Dr Tony Holland in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science of University of Technology, Sydney and the contact number is 02 9514 3824. You have been selected for this study because you have experienced the change, show ability to communicate to others, direct knowledge of the restructuring, and currently employed in the midlevel administrative scale (Level 6 to Level 10).

The purpose of this study is to investigate how midlevel faculty-based administrators construct meaning and perceive their profession particularly in situations of organizational change. It also aims to defend the importance of talent management in recruitment and retaining committed, skilled employees under restructure for better staff retention and the working environment.

Participation in this research is totally voluntary. There will be no consequence to the participants' employment either at present or in the future as a result of participating in the study. There is no obligation to participate. No identifying information about participants will be used in any paper that may result from this research. It will involve approximately one hour in the form of an interview with the researcher(s). The interview will be audio-taped and all information identifying participants will be stored separately. For participants who currently work with Ms Stella Ng (Doctor of Education Student, contact number 02 9514 3605, [stella.ng@uts.edu.au](mailto:stella.ng@uts.edu.au)) will be interviewed by Dr Tony Holland (Research Supervisor, [tony.holland@uts.edu.au](mailto:tony.holland@uts.edu.au)).

I am aware that I can contact Dr Tony Holland or Ms Stella Ng if I have any concerns about the research. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my participation from this research project at any time I wish, without consequences, and without giving a reason. I have read the information sheet, and the nature and the purpose of the research have been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.

I agree that Ms Stella Ng/Dr Tony Holland has answered all my questions fully and clearly.

I agree that the research data gathered from this project may be published in a form that does not identify me in any way.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed by

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witnessed by

\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

#### NOTE:

This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer, Ms Racheal Laugery (ph: 02 - 9514 9772, [racheal.laugery@uts.edu.au](mailto:racheal.laugery@uts.edu.au)). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.



### **Appendix 3: Interview Questions (1-14)**

1. How long have you been with the organisation and in your current job?
2. What is your work and educational background?
3. What sort of restructures have you experienced while you have been with the organisation and your current/ex job?
4. If I ask you how the restructures of the workplace affect your work, the way you work and your feeling towards your job, what would you say?
5. Discuss the specialisation are involved in doing your job as a xxxx.
6. Can you describe how your normal workday like and a difficult workday like?
7. What happens when problems come up and how do you deal with them and who do you turn to for support?
8. Consider all the restructures/changes in your workplace, have you noticed any changes within your workplace and between departments?
9. What do you like about your job?
10. What do you see your contribution in your workplace/the organisation/higher education sector?
11. What factors influenced how you see your contribution the most and why?
12. Do you see your job/administration is a profession and why?
13. What aspects of your job that you prefer not to have to deal with and why?
14. What are the reasons to stay or leave the university or the HE sector, either before or after organisational restructure?

## Appendix 4: Consent Form – Non-Participant Observation

Dr Tony Holland  
FACULTY OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES  
PHONE: (02) 9514 3824  
FAX: (02) 9514 3811  
E-MAIL: [tony.holland@uts.edu.au](mailto:tony.holland@uts.edu.au)



University of Technology, Sydney  
P O Box 123  
Broadway NSW 2007  
Australia  
[www.uts.edu.au](http://www.uts.edu.au)

UTS CRICOS PROVIDER CODE 00099F

### CONSENT FORM – NON-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION

Dear

As part of a Doctor of Education study at University of Technology, (UTS), Sydney, I am currently carrying out the research project **Impact of Organisational Restructuring on the working lives and identities of faculty-based midlevel administrative staff: A study of Australian universities**. My supervisor is Dr Tony Holland in the Faculty of Arts and Social Science of University of Technology, Sydney and the contact number is 02 9514 3824.

The purpose of this study is to investigate how midlevel faculty-based administrators construct meaning and perceive their profession particularly in situations of organizational change. It also aims to defend the importance of talent management in recruitment and retaining committed, skilled employees under restructure for better staff retention and the working environment.

I understand that my participation in this research will see me being observed while participating in a meeting at (*time*) on (*date*). This non-participant observation is designed for the research student to understand how individual manages to satisfy various requests within the overall framework that they work in and how individual construct meaning via the normal processes of discussion, decision making, and planning. I understand that this meeting the observation will be note-taking and no university/faculty/name will be mentioned. There will be no consequence to the participants' employment either at present or in the future as a result of participating in the study. No identifying information about participants will be used in any paper that may result from this research.

I am aware that I can contact Dr Tony Holland (Research Supervisor) or Ms Stella Ng (Doctor of Education Student) if I have any concerns about the research. I also understand that I am free to withdraw my participation from this research project at any time I wish, without consequences, and without giving a reason. I have read the information sheet, and the nature and the purpose of the research have been explained to me. I understand and agree to take part.

I agree that Ms Stella Ng/Dr Tony Holland has answered all my questions fully and clearly.

I agree that the research data gathered from this project may be published in a form that does not identify me in any way.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed by

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witnessed by

\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_

#### NOTE:

This study has been approved by the University of Technology, Sydney Human Research Ethics Committee. If you have any complaints or reservations about any aspect of your participation in this research which you cannot resolve with the researcher, you may contact the Ethics Committee through the Research Ethics Officer, Ms Racheal Laugery (ph: 02 - 9514 9772, [racheal.laugery@uts.edu.au](mailto:racheal.laugery@uts.edu.au)). Any complaint you make will be treated in confidence and investigated fully and you will be informed of the outcome.

## **Appendix 5: Better Universities Renewal Funding 2008 Summary of Institutional Projects**

### **Australian Catholic University**

**Allocation:** \$5.889 million

#### **Project Summary:**

The Australian Catholic University has allocated Better Universities Renewal Funding to projects across all six campuses. Included are major upgrades of teaching spaces (including the conversion of Central Hall in Melbourne into a 500 seat lecture facility), upgraded student amenities on all campuses, and library and student study space developments at North Sydney. The University will also improve its nationwide information and communications technology capital infrastructure for teaching, learning and research through the upgrading of its AARNeT network access and other major ICT infrastructure to provide more modern and robust teaching and research IT facilities for staff and students.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **The Australian National University**

**Allocation:** \$23.973 million

#### **Project Summary:**

The Australian National University has made a major commitment to improved student amenities via Better Universities Renewal Funding. The University will construct new workspaces for postgraduate students and new library student learning spaces for individual or group work, build a new functions/meetings area for the student associations and affiliated clubs and societies, and provide extended student information services across the entire campus by deploying next generation wireless technology.

The University will also use the funding for capital works to improve the teaching and research environment, including the construction of digitally-enabled and laptop-friendly lecture theatres, new infrastructure for plant science and archaeological and natural history research, and construction of an enclosed high roof industrial laboratory for engineering research.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education**

**Allocation:** \$0.35 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will enable the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education to revitalise its student teaching and learning environment through a significant upgrade to its academic conference facilities. The upgrade will create a superior learning environment for indigenous students and include installation of audio-visual and computer based teaching aids designed to facilitate collaboration between students and enhance the collaborative relationship with academic staff. The facility will house modern video conference teaching capabilities to allow the Institute to further support education in remote areas.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; teaching spaces.

### **Bond University**

**Allocation:** \$1.362 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will be used for an extension and major refurbishment to Bond University's Main Library. The funding will allow the University to develop a 'next generation' library space that will offer diverse learning experiences. An environment will be created in which printed and digital information will be combined with spaces that support today's collaborative learning patterns.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** libraries and student study spaces.

### **Central Queensland University**

**Allocation:** \$5.455 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will enable Central Queensland University to upgrade its Community Sports Centre stadium in Rockhampton. The upgrade will make the facility suitable for sporting events, graduations and examinations, and improved teaching facilities will house new physiology and biomechanics laboratories and postgraduate research space for the School of Health and Human Performance and related disciplines. The University will also use Better Universities Renewal Funding to undertake a major refurbishment of its Engineering Teaching Precinct at Rockhampton and to complete an upgrade of teaching and research ICT infrastructure servicing its regional campus network.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **Charles Darwin University**

**Allocation:** \$2.954 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will be directed towards an expansion of the Sport and Recreation Precinct on the Casuarina Campus. The expansion will be in the form of new teaching and laboratory spaces for sports science and physiotherapy and include a world class 200m<sup>2</sup> sports science laboratory and teaching area (connected to a custom-built 25m running track) and dedicated physiotherapy teaching and practical space. The development will complement other Precinct developments to yield a high quality teaching and research environment.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** laboratories; teaching spaces.

### **Charles Sturt University**

**Allocation:** \$11.645 million

#### **Project Summary:**

The University will use Better Universities Renewal Funding across a range of campuses to improve the quality, access and functionality of its infrastructure. Student spaces at Thurgoona, Wagga Wagga & Bathurst will be updated and expanded, and the Learning Commons at Bathurst will be extended to encompass the whole library. The extension and refurbishment of the Morell Laboratories at Wagga Wagga will enable the integration of world class technologies including a full mock hospital ward for the expansion of the Nursing and Midwifery courses incorporating linked tutorial and scenario observation stations. The University will also embark on a major extension of its wireless network capacity and install integrated podcasting, vodcasting and synchronous online learning tools within the University's Online Learning Environment.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **Curtin University of Technology**

**Allocation:** \$13.707 million

**Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will be used to refurbish the Chemistry Building, one of the University's oldest buildings on the Bentley Campus in Western Australia, to create a modern and integrated suite of research and teaching laboratories and ancillary facilities for the Health and Life Sciences. In addition, the project will expand facilities for the Student Self Learning Commons, student amenities and provide much needed additional study, office and general teaching space in a central location on the campus. The University will also take the opportunity to update 40 year old services infrastructure within the building.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

**Deakin University**

**Allocation:** \$13.782 million

**Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will enable Deakin University to deliver a new suite of advanced chemical and biological laboratories on its Geelong Campus at Waurn Ponds. The project will create eight large laboratories, laboratory support rooms, temperature controlled rooms, a solvent distillation room, equipment rooms, study areas for students and researchers along with meeting, break-out and seminar spaces. The facility will enhance collaborative research conducted by multi-disciplinary teams, primarily in the chemical and biological sciences. A specialist teaching laboratory will also be created allowing students to complete physiology units at the Geelong Campus rather than having to travel to the University's Burwood Campus in Melbourne, as is currently required.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces.

### **Edith Cowan University**

**Allocation:** \$9.188 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Edith Cowan University will use Better Universities Renewal Funding to expand student amenities at its Mount Lawley Campus by constructing a crèche and undertaking significant site works for the development new student accommodation. The new facility will provide a minimum of 300 beds and will be developed through a public private partnership. In addition, significant renewal works will be undertaken at the campus to improve teaching spaces for the Faculty of Education and Arts, upgrade visual arts design studios, media and broadcasting facilities, and student study areas. To support the needs of the Faculty of Computing, Health and Sciences, laboratories will be provided at the Joondalup Campus.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces; and student amenities.

### **The Flinders University of South Australia**

**Allocation:** \$8.931 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Flinders University will use its Better Universities Renewal Funding to improve teaching and learning facilities through a complete upgrade of the University's six major lecture theatres, the construction of new clinical laboratories for nursing, midwifery and allied medical programs, additional collaborative learning spaces in the Central Library and a University-wide wireless network providing students with access to University systems and online resources. Student amenities will also be enhanced through an upgrade of the University's refectory.



**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **Griffith University**

**Allocation:** \$16.212 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Griffith University will utilise Better Universities Renewal Funding for a variety of projects including the construction of a new Student Centre that will house a number of non-academic student related functions on the Nathan Campus. The funding will also support a major refurbishment of existing space at the Mt Gravatt Campus to accommodate increasing numbers of research students; help to reconfigure and refurbish biomolecular laboratories on the Nathan Campus and; undertake major renovations to a number of lecture theatres to create highly flexible, state-of-the-art teaching spaces that facilitate mixed modes of teaching.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **James Cook University**

**Allocation:** \$7.845 million

#### **Project Summary:**

James Cook University plans to use the majority of its Better Universities Renewal Funding to redevelop the Eddie Koiki Mabo Library building on Douglas Campus to create a student-centred facility with information services, technology support, and learning support designed around an integrated digital environment. The goal is to develop a contemporary mix of formal, informal and interactive social, learning and research spaces to ensure that the Library and Learning Centre is a vibrant student centre ready to deliver a new range of resources and services supporting flexible, self-

directed learning and research. The funding will also be used to upgrade teaching and learning facilities within the Faculty of Law Business and Creative Arts and the School of Tropical and Marine Biology.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **La Trobe University**

**Allocation:** \$14.291 million

#### **Project Summary:**

La Trobe University is capitalising on the Better Universities Renewal Funding initiative to improve campus infrastructure in line with its Master Plan. A new Student Hub will combine all non-academic student services into a single building on the Bundoora Campus. The building will house a range of student services including enrolment, legal and financial services, counselling, advocacy, transport services and accommodation sourcing. The new facility will also include a student lounge, project spaces and study facilities. Better study and learning facilities will also result from the expansion of study spaces within the library, creating a more suitable space for evolving learning styles and practices. A major refurbishment of wet laboratories will enhance infrastructure for life sciences and molecular medicine research. The University's voice and data networks will also undergo a major upgrade. Along with expanded lecture recording and transmission capacity, this will create more effective learning opportunities for all students, but particularly the University's regional students.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **Macquarie University**

**Allocation:** \$11.873 million

**Project Summary:**

Macquarie University has allocated its Better Universities Renewal Funding to assist with the completion of three projects of significant importance to the University. The first is a new University library which is expected to be completed during 2010. The building will have space for 3000 flexible study spaces and cater for students with special needs, research, post graduate and undergraduate students. The University will also refurbish the former Australian Film Television and Audio School building which will provide learning for media, film, music, dance, radio production, cultural studies and international communications. New laboratories are also being created which incorporate an open floor plan to allow a more efficient use of space with enhanced teaching effectiveness.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces.

**Melbourne College of Divinity**

**Allocation:** \$0.339 million

**Project Summary:**

The Melbourne College of Divinity will use Better Universities Renewal Funding for ICT infrastructure for research and teaching including the fit out of classrooms and lecture theatres and installation of wireless internet and student access portals. The College will also undertake the major refurbishment of student study spaces and library facilities including library IT systems and computer laboratories. The funding provides the opportunity to renew the technology infrastructure of the College to ensure the highest quality teaching and learning outcomes, and to effectively support the College's research scholars.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

## **Monash University**

**Allocation:** \$29.602 million

### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will enable Monash University to undertake a number of projects that will significantly enhance its teaching and research capabilities. The University will embark on a major upgrade to its information and communications technology network to provide enhanced teaching platforms and research data warehousing capacity. It will also deliver major science laboratory refurbishments to create state-of-the-art research facilities with flexible and innovative working spaces to expand the University's research output. In addition, the University's fit-out of new teaching space at one of its major teaching hospitals, The Alfred Hospital, will be undertaken to provide expanded, new and innovative environment to support its medical training.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; teaching spaces.

## **Murdoch University**

**Allocation:** \$7.789 million

### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will be used to refurbish the Veterinary diagnostic imaging facilities, including upgrades to the space itself to allow new teaching laboratory facilities, and the provision of the latest digital imaging technologies. The University will also install new sports facilities to support new academic programs and to provide improved amenities for all students as part of an enhanced campus experience. A new Student Service Centre will consolidate multiple student service centres across the main campus into one location, and provide new student support facilities, consultation areas and a helpdesk. In addition, the University is upgrading

laboratory facilities and implementing a new research support system to more effectively support research related activities.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **Queensland University of Technology**

**Allocation:** \$19.156 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will be used to upgrade the Kelvin Grove Library, updating learning facilities and improving access to services for students with a disability. The refurbishments will include the upgrade of base building services as well as improved study spaces and ICT facilities. The University will also invest in the upgrade of much needed digital equipment within the Creative Industries Precinct. The upgrade will include infrastructure for specialist digital recording and audio visual equipment that mirrors that used in professional environments. In addition, the University will embark on a major upgrade to its library facilities at the Gardens Point Campus. The refurbishment includes the relocation of the current print periodicals collection to make way for dedicated group study rooms and informal group learning areas offering enhanced technology services. Further enhancements at the Gardens Point Campus include the refurbishment of the Law & Justice Centre, as well as an update of the Student Labs facility, to provide a more functional teaching and research environment for both staff and students.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **RMIT University**

**Allocation:** \$14.430 million

**Project Summary:**

RMIT University will invest its Better University Renewal Funding in improved teaching and learning facilities and student amenities at its City and Bundoora campuses. At its City Campus nine new teaching spaces will be built and existing space renovated to provide a new home for RMIT student services. RMIT will also develop Franklin Street, between Swanston and Victoria Streets, to create additional outdoor space for student use. At its Bundoora Campus, a new state-of-the-art lecture theatre will be constructed to provide much needed additional teaching space at the campus. Student amenities will also be enhanced and new ICT infrastructure will improve student access to university services, including library, teaching and research facilities.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

**Southern Cross University**

**Allocation:** \$5.169 million

**Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will allow Southern Cross University to improve services for both students and staff. A Student Support Centre at the Lismore Campus will bring together counselling, financial support, study support and health services. In addition, the environmental sciences laboratories will be extended and upgraded. An extension of existing facilities will create a Multi-Purpose Health Centre at Lismore which will be used for sport testing, clinical trials and workshops, and allow the relocation of the teaching Naturopathy Clinic to within campus grounds as well as provide additional teaching space. Additional teaching space will also be constructed for the Masters Degree Program at Gnibi College of Australian Indigenous Peoples.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **Swinburne University of Technology**

**Allocation:** \$6.437 million

#### **Project Summary:**

The Swinburne Student Services building will combine all non-academic student services into a single building to be constructed in the middle of the Hawthorn Campus. The building will include student lounge, project spaces and study facilities; gymnasium space; prayer rooms; advocacy, language and study support services; consolidated health services, as well as providing a purpose built data machine room which will service all six of Swinburne's Melbourne based campuses.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; student study spaces; student amenities.

### **The University of Adelaide**

**Allocation:** \$15.476 million

#### **Project Summary:**

The University of Adelaide's new Student Learning Hub will be a 'one-stop-shop' for student services and learning in the heart of the North Terrace Campus. The enclosed precinct will be a lively student destination, bringing together student support services with formal and informal teaching, learning and project spaces, and lounge, study and café facilities - adjacent to the library and on-campus medical services. The Student Learning Hub will incorporate an extension of a campus-wide high-speed wireless network, allowing easy, flexible and secure access to resources and materials for students and staff anytime anywhere.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

## **University of Ballarat**

**Allocation:** \$2.898 million

### **Project Summary:**

The University of Ballarat will use Better Universities Renewal Funding to redevelop many of its Science and Engineering laboratories. This redevelopment will enhance opportunities for industry linkages and lead to world-class Science and Engineering teaching facilities at the Mt Helen Campus using best-practice design. In addition, significant refurbishments will be carried out to the Albert Coates Complex, the major student 'hub' of the Mt Helen Campus. New generation learning and study spaces also will be created at the SMB campus library.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

## **University of Canberra**

**Allocation:** \$4.694 million

### **Project Summary:**

The University of Canberra will use Better Universities Renewal Funding to renovate the existing Faculty of Creative Practice space to create a national media training centre on the University's Bruce Campus. The centre will house state-of-the-art studios, laboratories and teaching rooms, and will provide a learning experience that mirrors industry practice across the journalism, multimedia and marketing communication disciplines. A major refurbishment and extension of laboratory, teaching and research facilities at the Faculty of Science and Institute of Applied Ecology will also be undertaken; flexible learning options for students will be enhanced through the upgrade and expansion the University's lecture streaming technology and; research students at the Faculty of Education will have access to improved facilities.



**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces.

**The University of Melbourne**

**Allocation:** \$34.759 million

**Project Summary:**

The University of Melbourne will use Better Universities Renewal Funding to develop Student Centres which will provide a ‘one-stop-shop’ for student service delivery for Biomedicine, Environment and Science Students. Co-located Learning Centres with teaching, collaborative and social learning spaces are supported by IT-rich environments. The funding will also be used to develop an Arts Graduate School which will provide collaborative teaching spaces and informal learning areas with wireless connectivity and multi-media facilities, seminar rooms, lecture spaces, computer labs and student services facilities for graduate students in the Arts Precinct.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

**University of New England**

**Allocation:** \$7.261 million

**Project Summary:**

Leading-edge climate change and greenhouse research undertaken at the University will be significantly enhanced by the development of a state-of-the-art facility to undertake soil carbon and greenhouse gas studies. This will incorporate research student study spaces and laboratory facilities and will be complemented by the establishment of a high resolution 3D X-ray uTomography laboratory for teaching and research. Better Universities Renewal Funding will also enable significant improvement in the University’s e-learning infrastructure and much-needed enhancements to student

amenities including the University's student radio station that has been broadcasting for almost 40 years and is Australia's only continually operating student-based community radio station.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **University of New South Wales**

**Allocation:** \$26.1 million

#### **Project Summary:**

The University will invest its Better Universities Renewal Funding in information and communications technology, student study spaces and research laboratories. The ICT investment will form part of the University's \$50m renewal program for its IT platforms. The modernisation will significantly increase capability and reliability for the high-end users of IT capacity - students and researchers. The University will increase by 1,400 its provision of student study spaces, both formal and in-formal, around the Kensington Campus. The University's investment in laboratories will increase capacity in one of its areas of strength - material science and engineering.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; and teaching spaces.

### **University of Newcastle**

**Allocation:** \$13.745 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will enable The University of Newcastle to deliver real benefits to students through the upgrade or additions to existing teaching and learning, research and amenity spaces bringing these facilities up to contemporary

standards and providing for increased innovation in approaches to teaching. Several projects at the Callaghan Campus include an upgrade of existing teaching and learning spaces for architecture, business and education, and the construction of several new teaching laboratories in allied health, nursing and engineering. The University is also undertaking several projects at its Ourimbah campus to upgrade teaching and learning spaces, laboratories and student amenities. At the Port Macquarie Campus, the University has committed Better Universities Renewal Funding towards the construction of independent learning facilities within the existing cafeteria and library building.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **University of Notre Dame Australia**

**Allocation:** \$2.58 million

#### **Project Summary:**

The University of Notre Dame Australia will use Better Universities Renewal Funding to embark on a major upgrade to its information technology, audio visual and data network. The upgrade will ensure Notre Dame's teaching and research capability can meet the rapidly changing needs of this generation of staff and students. The University will also refurbish a site on the Broadway Campus to create a new academic centre. The development will comprise two 150 seat state-of-the-art lecture theatres and four tutorial rooms. Better Universities Renewal Funding will also enable a specialist fit out of its purpose built teacher Education Building which will be situated in the heart of the Fremantle Campus.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **The University of Queensland**

**Allocation:** \$30.159 million

**Project Summary:**

The University is using Better Universities Renewal Funding to undertake several projects including the construction of new veterinary science teaching laboratories for the School of Veterinary Science at the Gatton Campus. The funding will also go toward upgrading teaching space on four levels of the Clinical Sciences building at the Herston Campus. The University will also replace accommodation at the Heron Island Research Station which is utilised for student field trips averaging some 1,300 students annually. The refurbishment of the Joyce Ackroyd Building at the St Lucia Campus will enable the relocation of the School of Journalism and Communication. The project will provide a facility for the training of future journalists and communications professionals in the changing technological world of media.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; teaching spaces; student amenities.

**University of South Australia**

**Allocation:** \$13.346 million

**Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will be used to provide direct benefits to existing and new students at the University. Projects include a new data centre which will improve the capacity, capability and flexibility of the University's information and communication technology infrastructure to support teaching, learning and emerging e-Research activities. The funding will also contribute towards the construction of a new building dedicated developing innovative solutions and technologies for environmental contamination problems. The Nursing Skills teaching laboratories and associated spaces will be refurbished and a range of other teaching spaces will be upgraded to provide new experiential and modern learning environments that support both tutor-led and

learner-led activities enabling hands-on teaching and learning for students. Student amenities will also be enhanced at the Mawson Lakes and City West Campuses.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **University of Southern Queensland**

**Allocation:** \$5.943 million

#### **Project Summary:**

The University will use its Better Universities Renewal Funding towards the development of an innovative, new Learning Commons that will revitalise the heart of the Toowoomba Campus. The Learning Commons, incorporating enhanced library services, learning spaces and student amenities, will provide a context for 21st century learning and help equip students with the skills required for participation in the modern workplace. Better Universities Renewal Funding will also help deliver ICT infrastructure that will allow students, including those studying off-campus, enhanced access to learning and teaching resources, research resources and student management functions online.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; libraries and student study spaces; student amenities.

### **The University of Sydney**

**Allocation:** \$35.219 million

#### **Project Summary:**

The University of Sydney will use Better Universities Renewal Funding on a range of priority projects which will renew vital campus infrastructure. The projects provide key benefits to undergraduate and graduate teaching and include upgrades of teaching space

within lecture and seminar rooms with an emphasis on up-to-date application of digital technology, including interactive and multimodal, flexible teaching delivery systems. Other projects include refurbishment and upgrade of laboratory teaching space and ancillary facilities for biological sciences, significant investment in library resources and amenities for students. These project works will increase The University of Sydney's ability to deliver first class education, research and student support facilities.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **University of Tasmania**

**Allocation:** \$11.456 million

#### **Project Summary:**

The University of Tasmania will use Better Universities Renewal Funding to establish new teaching facilities for its School of Medicine. The teaching facilities will be located in a new building close to the Royal Hobart Hospital and will provide the focal point for Bachelor of Medicine / Bachelor of Surgery students as well as related health sciences professionals in Tasmania. The facilities will include a lecture theatre, specialist teaching laboratories, clinical practice teaching suites, large and small teaching/tutorial rooms with video conference and audio visual equipment, and group study areas, catering for 500 students. The co-location of the teaching facilities with medical research functions will provide a foundation for increased collaboration between professionals working in teaching and research, and foster career pathways for students between research and clinical practice.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; student study spaces; teaching spaces.

### **University of Technology, Sydney**

**Allocation:** \$13.698 million

**Project Summary:**

The University will invest Better Universities Renewal Funding in nine major capital works projects which will substantially enhance the student amenities on the Campus and provide critical support for teaching and research activities across several faculties including Science, Business, Engineering and Information Technology, and Arts and Social Sciences. The University's objective is to develop flexible and imaginative learning environments for students with the support of creative and effective technologies. Projects include the creation of a Research Hub which will bring together two major research groups, the Centre for Study of Choice and the Centre for Health Economics Research and Evaluation. Also supported are upgrades to student amenities, study spaces, and laboratories.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; student study spaces; and student amenities.

**University of the Sunshine Coast**

**Allocation:** \$2.299 million

**Project Summary:**

The University of the Sunshine Coast will use Better Universities Renewal Funding to create specialist facilities within the new Health and Sport Centre. The Health and Sport Centre is located in the heart of the University's Sports Precinct and houses specialised teaching, training and clinic facilities for the health and sport sciences, namely, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, psychology, paramedics, nutrition and dietetics. In addition, the University will embark on a major upgrade to its information technology video and data network.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; teaching spaces; student amenities.

## **The University of Western Australia**

**Allocation:** \$16.208 million

### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will assist the University with the construction of a new Science Library building at the Crawley Campus. The building will amalgamate collections from several smaller, dispersed libraries into a centrally located, state-of-the-art environment. The four storey building will incorporate group study rooms, individual research spaces, a grid access room and other multimedia teaching spaces. The building will also house a café and parenting rooms. Special attention has been given to the provision of empathetic and high quality universal access and design.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; student study spaces; and teaching spaces.

## **University of Western Sydney**

**Allocation:** \$15.854 million

### **Project Summary:**

The University of Western Sydney will use Better University Renewal Funding for a number of much-needed infrastructure projects across its campuses including developing a student precinct at the Parramatta Campus, a major growth campus of the University. The University will also refurbish the Hawkesbury Campus Library to ensure students have access to modern library facilities and extensively refurbish the School of Computing and Mathematics at the Parramatta Campus to provide new teaching and postgraduate research laboratory space. Other works will include refurbishing the Penrith Campus engineering precinct and developing a multi-function facility for Indigenous education at the Kingswood site of the Penrith Campus, as part of the University's continuing commitment to Indigenous education. The new



Badanami Indigenous Education Centre will be a focal point for Indigenous and other communities.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; laboratories; libraries and student study spaces; teaching spaces; student amenities.

### **University of Wollongong**

**Allocation:** \$9.738 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will be used for a major refurbishment of the Hope Theatre, the largest tiered lecture theatre in the University. This will create a state of the art teaching space with enhanced audio visual capacity and acoustics, which will enhance student teaching and learning outcomes. In addition, the University will embark on a major upgrade to its information technology voice and data network. This will include refreshing the aged wireless network across the Wollongong Campus to provide a more seamless, robust and functional teaching and research communication environment for both staff and students.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; teaching spaces.

### **Victoria University**

**Allocation:** \$8.185 million

#### **Project Summary:**

Better Universities Renewal Funding will enable Victoria University to integrate physical teaching spaces with new technologies to enhance teaching and research. Audio and video enabled classrooms will facilitate online learning and flexible delivery not constrained to physical locations on campus. The University will embark upon a

significant upgrade of its network infrastructure across all campuses to deliver systems for collaborative learning and research. The project will provide students with the ability to learn in a wide range of settings whether it be at the University, the workplace or other locations of their choosing.

**Priority areas addressed by project:** information and communications technology; teaching spaces.

*Total does not add to \$500 million due to rounding.*

## Appendix 6: BURF Funding Calculations and Allocations

Capital funding of \$490 million has been allocated among all Table A and Table B higher education providers on a formula basis taking account of institutional size and research activity. The Australian National University received a special payment of \$10 million recognising its unique mix of teaching and research. The formula used for calculating allocations was based on student load (70%) and research funding shares (30%). This distribution reflects the core functions of universities' teaching, learning, and research performance.

Higher Education Provider	Approximate Grant \$m
Australian Catholic University	5.9
Australian National University	24.0
Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	0.4
Bond University	1.4
Central Queensland University	5.5
Charles Darwin University	3.0
Charles Sturt University	11.6
Curtin University of Technology	13.7
Deakin University	13.8
Edith Cowan University	9.2
Flinders University of South Australia	8.9
Griffith University	16.2
James Cook University	7.8
La Trobe University	14.3
Macquarie University	11.9

Melbourne College of Divinity	0.3
Monash University	29.6
Murdoch University	7.8
Queensland University of Technology	19.2
Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University	14.4
Southern Cross University	5.2
Swinburne University of Technology	6.4
University of Adelaide	15.5
University of Ballarat	2.9
University of Canberra	4.7
University of Melbourne	34.8
University of New England	7.3
University of New South Wales	26.1
University of Newcastle	13.7
University of Notre Dame Australia	2.6
University of Queensland	30.2
University of South Australia	13.3
University of Southern Queensland	5.9
University of Sydney	35.2
University of Tasmania	11.5
University of Technology, Sydney	13.7
University of the Sunshine Coast	2.3
University of Western Australia	16.2
University of Western Sydney	15.9

University of Wollongong	9.7
Victoria University	8.2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>500*</b>

\*Total does not add due to rounding

## **Appendix 7: 2008 Bradley Report- 46 Recommendations (pp.xviii-xxv)**

### **Recommendation 1**

That the Australian Government adopts the vision, strategic goals and principles for the higher education system set out in this report. *(Chapter 1)*

### **Recommendation 2**

That the Australian Government sets a national target of at least 40 per cent of 25- to 34-year-olds having attained a qualification at bachelor level or above by 2020. *(Chapter 3.1)*

### **Recommendation 3**

That the Australian Government commission work on the measurement of the socio-economic status of students in higher education with a view to moving from the current postcode methodology to one based on the individual circumstances of each student. *(Chapter 3.2)*

### **Recommendation 4**

That the Australian Government set a national target that, by 2020, 20 per cent of higher education enrolments at undergraduate level are people from low socio-economic status backgrounds. *(Chapter 3.2)*

### **Recommendation 5**

That the Australian Government introduces the following package of reforms to the student income support system. *(Chapter 3.3)*

<b>Item</b>	<b>Nature of the reform</b>
Parental Income Test threshold	Increase threshold for Parental Income Test to \$42,559, consistent with the value used for the Family Tax Benefit
Parental Income Test indexation	Change the indexation rate to be consistent with Family Tax Benefit index, a combination of CPI and Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE)
Parental Income Test taper rate	Change the taper rate for reduction in benefits for each child in the family on income support benefits to 20 per cent.  Apply the new taper rate only once as is the case for the Family Tax Benefit rather than for every child in the family receiving benefits.
Personal Income Test threshold	Increase the personal income threshold for Youth Allowance and Austudy to \$400 per fortnight.
Personal Income Test indexation	Change the indexation of the personal income threshold from zero to a wage basis (for example, Male Total Average Weekly Earnings).
Age of independence	Reduce the age of independence for Austudy from 25 to 22 years.
Change to eligibility conditions for independence	Remove the workforce participation criteria for independence of:  (a) Working part-time for at least 15 hours per week for at least 2 years; and (b) Earning a specified amount in an 18-month period since leaving school.  Introduce 'grandfathering' arrangements for existing students who have already satisfied these criteria for independence.
Eligibility of masters coursework students	Extend eligibility for benefits to students enrolled in all masters by coursework programs.
Enhance the Commonwealth Scholarships program	Continue and enhance the Commonwealth Scholarships program by providing benefits to all eligible students on Austudy or Youth Allowance for education costs and accommodation costs (for those who need to leave home) and by transferring responsibility for the payment of benefits to Centerlink.

**Recommendation 6**

That the Australian Government undertake a regular process of triennial review of the income support system to assess the overall effectiveness of the support payments in reducing financial barriers to participation of students in need. *(Chapter 3.3)*

**Recommendation 7**

That the Australian Government require all accredited higher education providers to administer the Graduate Destination Survey, Course Experience Questionnaire and the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement from 2009 and report annually on the findings. *(Chapter 3.4)*

**Recommendation 8**

That the Australian Government increase the total funding allocation for the Research Infrastructure Block Grants program by about \$300 million per year. This represents an increase from about 20 cents to 50 cents in the dollar for each dollar provided through competitive grants. *(Chapter 3.5)*

**Recommendation 9**

That the Australian Government commission research into future demand for, and supply of, people with higher degree by research qualifications and that it increase the number of Research Training Scheme places on the basis of the findings of the research. *(Chapter 3.5)*

**Recommendation 10**

That the Australian Government increase the value of Australian Postgraduate Awards to \$25,000 per year and increase the length of support to four years, as recommended by the National Innovation Review, to provide greater incentives for high-achieving graduates to consider a research career. *(Chapter 3.5)*

**Recommendation 11**



That the regulatory and other functions of Australian Education International be separated, with the regulatory functions becoming the responsibility of an independent national regulatory body. *(Chapter 3.6)*

#### **Recommendation 12**

That the industry development responsibilities of Australian Education International be revised and be undertaken by an independent agency which is accountable to Commonwealth and state and territory governments and education providers. *(Chapter 3.6)*

#### **Recommendation 13**

That the Australian Government provide up to 1,000 tuition subsidy scholarships per year for international students in higher degree by research programs targeted to areas of skills shortage. The scholarships would give the recipients the benefit of being enrolled on the same basis as domestic students. *(Chapter 3.6)*

#### **Recommendation 14**

That higher education providers use a proportion of their international student income to match the Australian Government tuition scholarships by providing financial assistance for living expenses for international students in higher degrees by research. *(Chapter 3.6)*

#### **Recommendation 15**

That the Australian Government liaise with states and territories to ensure consistent policies for school-fee waivers for the dependants of international research students in government-subsidised places and examine its visa arrangements to improve the conditions for spouse work visas. *(Chapter 3.6)*

#### **Recommendation 16**

That, after further consideration of current problems with regional provision, the Australian Government provide an additional \$80 million per year from 2012 in funding for sustainable higher education provision in regional areas to replace the existing

regional loading. This should include funding to develop innovative local solutions through a range of flexible and collaborative delivery arrangements in partnership with other providers such as TAFE. *(Chapter 3.7)*

### **Recommendation 17**

That the Australian Government commission a study to examine the feasibility of a new national university for regional areas and, if the study indicates that a new national regional university is feasible, the Australian Government provide appropriate funding for its establishment and operation. *(Chapter 3.7)*

### **Recommendation 18**

That the Australian Government initiate a process with key stakeholders to determine the needs of outer metropolitan and regional areas for higher education and the best ways to respond to those needs. *(Chapter 3.7)*

### **Recommendation 19**

That the Australian Government adopt a framework for higher education accreditation, quality assurance and regulation featuring:

- accreditation of all providers based on their capacity to deliver o • n core requirements including:
  - an Australian Qualifications Framework with enhanced architecture and updated and more coherent descriptors of learning outcomes;
  - strengthened requirements for universities to carry out research in the fields in which they teach so that they can contribute fully to the knowledge economy and produce graduates who embody the distinctive value of teaching that is informed by research;
  - new quality assurance arrangements involving the development of standards and implementation of a transparent process for assuring the quality of learning outcomes across all providers of higher education; and

- an independent national regulatory body responsible for regulating all types of tertiary education. In the higher education sector it would:
  - accredit new providers including new universities;
  - periodically reaccredit all providers including the existing universities on a cycle of up to 10 years depending on an assessment of risk;
  - carry out quality audits of all providers focused on the institution's academic standards and the processes for setting, monitoring and maintaining them. This would include auditing the adoption of outcomes and standards-based arrangements for assuring the quality of higher education;
  - register and audit providers for the purpose of legislation protecting overseas students studying in Australia and assuring the quality of their education;
  - provide advice to government on higher education issues referred to it or on its own initiative; and
  - supervise price capping arrangements in courses offered only on a full-fee basis where public subsidies do not apply. (*Chapter 4.1*)

### **Recommendation 20**

That the Australian Government establish by 2010, after consultation with the states and territories, a national regulatory body to be responsible for:

- accrediting and reaccrediting all providers of higher education and accrediting their courses where the provider is not authorised to do so;
- conducting regular quality audits of higher education providers;
- providing advice on quality, effectiveness and efficiency; and
- registering and auditing providers for the purposes of the *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000*.

(*Chapter 4.1*)

### **Recommendation 21**

That the Australian Government, after consultation with the states and territories, revise the processes for higher education accreditation and audit to provide for:

- periodic reaccreditation of all higher education providers on a cycle of up to 10 years by a national regulatory body with the authority to impose conditions on reaccreditation, to require follow-up action or to remove a provider's right to operate if necessary; and
- a shorter-cycle quality audit focused on their academic standards and processes for setting, monitoring and maintaining them with the results to be publicly released and a process for follow-up on action required. *(Chapter 4.1)*

### **Recommendation 22**

That the Australian Government, after consultation with the states and territories, develop more rigorous criteria for accrediting universities and other higher education providers based around strengthening the link between teaching and research as a defining characteristic of university accreditation and reaccreditation. In particular, universities should be required to:

- deliver higher education qualifications including research higher degrees in at least three broad fields of education initially and a larger number over time;
- undertake sufficient research in at least three broad fields initially and over time in all broad fields in which coursework degrees are offered; and
- undertake sufficient research in all narrow fields in which research higher degrees are offered. *(Chapter 4.1)*

### **Recommendation 23**

That the Australian Government commission and appropriately fund work on the development of new quality assurance arrangements for higher education as part of the new framework set out in Recommendation 19. This would involve:

- a set of indicators and instruments to directly assess and compare learning outcomes; and
- a set of formal statements of academic standards by discipline along with processes for applying those standards. *(Chapter 4.1)*

#### **Recommendation 24**

That the Australian Government, in consultation with the states and territories, review the Australian Qualifications Framework to improve and clarify its structure and qualifications descriptors. Ongoing responsibility for a revised qualifications framework should rest with the national regulatory body. *(Chapter 4.1)*

#### **Recommendation 25**

That the higher education financing system be designed around the following principles to:

- provide students with increased opportunities to decide for themselves what and where they will study through an entitlement;
- maintain the existing income contingent loans schemes that overcome up-front barriers to study;
- allocate government funding through an approach that is:
  - driven by student demand and so largely formula-based with fewer separate, small components of funding;
  - fair, transparent and as simple as possible to understand and administer while retaining the integrity of the policy framework;
- reward providers for performance against agreed outcomes by containing a component which is based on achievement of targets; and
- ensure that Australia remains competitive in the provision of higher education compared with other countries by:
  - providing adequate levels of funding for each of the core activities of teaching and research;
  - supporting growth in higher education participation as part of achieving attainment targets; and
  - preserving the real value of the government's public investment in the sector over time. *(Chapter 4.2)*

**Recommendation 26**

That the Australian Government increase the base funding for teaching and learning in higher education by 10 per cent from 2010. (*Chapter 4.2*)

**Recommendation 27**

That the Australian Government maintain the future value of increased base funding for higher education by an indexation formula that is based on 90 per cent of the Labour Price Index (Professional) plus the Consumer Price Index with weightings of 75 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. (*Chapter 4.2*)

**Recommendation 28**

That the Australian Government commission an independent triennial review of the base funding levels for learning and teaching in higher education to ensure that funding levels remain internationally competitive and appropriate for the sector. (*Chapter 4.2*)

**Recommendation 29**

That the Australian Government introduce a demand-driven entitlement system for domestic higher education students, in which recognised providers are free to enrol as many eligible students as they wish in eligible higher education courses and receive corresponding government subsidies for those students. The arrangements would:

- apply initially to undergraduate courses but then be extended to postgraduate coursework level courses subject to further work on the balance of public and private benefits at that level of study;
- apply initially only to public universities (Table A providers under the *Higher Education Support Act 2003*), but would be extended to other approved providers when new regulatory arrangements are in place;
- set no time or dollar limit on the value of the entitlement;
- allow eligible providers to set their own entry standards, and determine which, and how many, students to enrol;
- allow providers to change the mix of student load by discipline cluster in response to demand; and

- allow the government to exclude a course of study from the demand-driven system if it wished to regulate student or graduate numbers.

### **Recommendation 30**

That the Australian Government regularly review the effectiveness of measures to improve higher education access and outcomes for Indigenous people in consultation with the Indigenous Higher Education Advisory Council. *(Chapter 4.2)*

### **Recommendation 31**

That the Australian Government increase the funding for the access and participation of under-represented groups of students to a level equivalent to 4 per cent of the total grants for teaching. This would be allocated through a new program for outreach activities and a loading paid to institutions enrolling students from low socio-economic backgrounds. Funding for the Disability Support Program would be increased to \$20 million per year. *(Chapter 4.2)*

### **Recommendation 32**

That the Australian Government quarantine 2.5 per cent of the total government funding for teaching and learning for each provider to be allocated on the basis of achievement against a set of institutional performance targets which would be negotiated annually. *(Chapter 4.2)*

### **Recommendation 33**

That the Australian Government commission work on options for achieving a more rational and consistent sharing of costs between students and across discipline clusters in the context of triennial reviews of base funding for learning and teaching. *(Chapter 4.2)*

### **Recommendation 34**

That the Australian Government implement an approach to tuition fees in which maximum student contribution amounts (price caps) apply for any domestic

undergraduate or coursework postgraduate students for whom the provider receives a public subsidy for their course. *(Chapter 4.2)*

### **Recommendation 35**

That the Australian Government implement an approach to tuition fees for domestic undergraduate students in which all providers are able to offer courses on a full-fee basis where public subsidies are not received for any students in that particular course. *(Chapter 4.2)*

### **Recommendation 36**

That the Australian Government:

- increase the maximum student contribution amount for nursing and education units of study for students commencing from 2010 to the band 1 rate; and
- encourage people to enrol and work in nursing and teaching by reducing HELP debts for graduates who work in those professions by \$1,500 per annum for each of five years, at the same time as their HELP repayment requirements are forgiven to an equivalent amount. *(Chapter 4.2)*

### **Recommendation 37**

That the Australian Government:

- increase the loan fee for FEE-HELP for fee-paying undergraduate students to 25 per cent; and
- remove the loan fee on OS-HELP loans to encourage more Australian students to undertake part of their studies overseas. *(Chapter 4.2)*

### **Recommendation 38**

That the Australian Government establish a new Structural Adjustment Fund amounting to about \$400 million in funding over a four-year period from 2009-10 to assist the sector to adapt to the reforms recommended in this report. *(Chapter 4.2)*

### **Recommendation 39**



That the Australian Government provide funds to match new philanthropic donations received in the sector as a means of stimulating an additional revenue stream from this source with the cost capped per institution, and in total at \$200 million over three years. *(Chapter 4.2)*

#### **Recommendation 40**

That Australian Government legislation and guidelines contain clear and objective criteria for determining access to different types of funding and assistance for higher education. These criteria should:

- reflect the public nature of the purposes for which funding is provided;
- ensure that funds for learning and teaching are directed only to institutions with the capacity to deliver courses of the requisite standard; and
- ensure that funds for research and research training are directed only to those higher education institutions which are accredited and have appropriately qualified and suitable researchers and the capability to achieve an acceptable return on public investment. *(Chapter 4.2)*

#### **Recommendation 41**

That the Australian Government provide funds of \$130 million over four years towards the costs of implementing these reforms. *(Chapter 4.2)*

#### **Recommendation 42**

That the Australian Government develop and implement an accountability framework for the new higher education funding system that is consistent with the broader funding, governance and regulatory framework. In particular it should:

- place primary accountability for performance with the provider's governing body;
- provide for accountability that is simple, clear and transparent where funding follows student demand;
- reflect negotiated targets in relation to performance-based funding; and

- ensure that accountability for other specific-purpose funding occurs under transparent guidelines and is administered through contracts in relation to each program. *(Chapter 4.2)*

**Recommendation 43**

That the Australian Government negotiate with the states and territories to expand the national regulatory and quality assurance agency (Recommendation 20) to cover the entire tertiary sector (including vocational education and training and higher education) and that the Australian Government assume full responsibility for the regulation of tertiary education and training in Australia by 2010. *(Chapter 4.3)*

**Recommendation 44**

That the Australian Government negotiate with the states and territories to introduce a tertiary entitlement funding model across higher education and vocational education and training (VET) commencing with the upper levels of VET (diplomas and advanced diplomas) and progressing to the other levels as soon as practicable. *(Chapter 4.3)*

**Recommendation 45**

That the Australian Government negotiates with the states and territories to extend income contingent loans to students enrolled in VET diplomas and advanced diplomas. *(Chapter 4.3)*

**Recommendation 46**

That the Australian Government and the governments of the states and territories agree to:

- establish a single ministerial council with responsibility for all tertiary education and training;
- improve the scope and coordination of labour market intelligence so that it covers the whole tertiary sector and supports a more responsive and dynamic role for both vocational education and training and higher education; and
- expand the purpose and role of the National Centre for Vocational Education Research so that it covers the whole tertiary sector. *(Chapter 4.3)*

**Appendix 8: Formal Qualification as part of essential criteria in Selection Criteria of MFAS including Faculty Managers in Australian Higher Education from 2011-2012**

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>University</b>	<b>Level</b>	<b>Essential Criteria: Degree</b>	<b>Desirable: Degree</b>	<b>Year</b>
Client Services Administrator, TAFE	Swinburne University of Technology	HEWS 4	Completion of an associate diploma level qualification with relevant work related experience or an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.		2012
Administrative Assistant, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	UNSW	Level 4	Relevant qualification and subsequent relevant administrative experience, or an equivalent level of knowledge gained through any other combination of education, training and/or experience.		2012
Administrative Assistant	UTS	HEWS 4	Diploma or certificate IV with relevant work experience.	Relevant degree or progress towards a relevant degree is desirable	2011
Executive Assistant, Institute for Sustainable Future	UTS	HEWS 4	Relevant tertiary qualifications and/or experience.		2012

Administrative Assistant, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences	UNSW	Level 5	A relevant qualification and subsequent relevant administrative experience at an appropriate level.		
Development Coordinator, International and Development	UTS	HEWS 5	Relevant tertiary qualifications and/or equivalent relevant experience.		2011
Communications and Programs Administrators, Learning and Teaching Unit	UNSW	Level 6	University degree in Communications or related discipline, or an equivalent level of knowledge and experience gained through a combination of education and training.		2012
Office Manager, Legal Office	UQ	HEWS 6	A law or business degree with subsequent relevant experience.		2012
Student Computing Services Technical Coordinator, eSolutions	Monash University	HEWS 7	Extensive relevant experience in IT, preferably in large organisation, coupled with leadership skills and relevant tertiary qualifications.	ITIL V3 Foundation Certification	2011
Higher Degree Research Management Coordinator (Project), Office of DVC (Research)	MQ	HEWS 7	Postgraduate qualifications or progress towards postgraduate qualifications, extensive relevant experience; or an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training		

Research Systems Support Officer	UNE	HEWS 7	A tertiary education qualification at bachelor's level, or higher, in one of the computing sciences, .. etc.		2012
Executive Officer, The University of Sydney China Studies Center	The University of Sydney	HEWS 8	Appropriate tertiary qualifications or equivalent combination of training and experience.		2011
Events Manager, Business School	The University of Sydney	HEO 8	Tertiary qualifications in Events management, project management or marketing, and/extensive relevant experience.		
Graduate Research Studies Manager, Faculty of Health Sciences	The University of Sydney	HEO 8	Postgraduate qualifications and relevant experience or extensive experience and management expertise in technical or administrative fields or equivalent combination of relevant experience and or training.		2012
Senior Academic Programs Officer, Business and Economics	MQ	HEWS 8	A degree in a related discipline with subsequent relevant experience or an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.		2011
Student Services Management, Faculty of Medicine	UNSW	Level 8	A degree and/or equivalent combination of certificate/diploma with extensive student administration and management experience.		2012

School Manager, Faculty of Medicine	UNSW	Level 8/9	Tertiary qualifications in a relevant discipline plus extensive managerial and operational experience within large organisations.		2011
School and Professional Placement Manager, Faculty of Arts	Monash University	HEWS 8	Possess a tertiary qualification at the postgraduate level and/or significant management and operational experience and skills, ideally within an education/training environment.		2012
Program Manager (Engineering), Faculty of Science	MQ	HEWS 9	A postgraduate qualification in a relevant area or an equivalent combination of relevant training and/or experience within the tertiary education sector.		2012
Faculty Manager, Student Administration, Faculty of Human Sciences	MQ	HEWS 9	Education, training and/or relevant experience equivalent to the completion of a postgraduate degree or progress towards a postgraduate degree and extensive relevant experience.		2011

Research Support Manager, Faculty of Business and Economics	Melbourne University	HEWS 9	An appropriate postgraduate qualification or progress towards postgraduate qualifications together with substantial relevant experience in a similar research management position, or an equivalent combination of relevant experience and/or education/training.		2012
HDR Programs and Support Manager, Deputy VC (Research)	Monash	HEWS 9	Postgraduate qualifications and extensive relevant professional experience, or an equivalent combination of extensive relevant management expertise and education/training.		
Talent and Leadership Manager, Deputy VC (Corporate Services)	UTS	HEWS 9	A degree in Human Resources or related discipline.	Postgraduate qualifications or MBA relevant to the role would be desire.	2012
School Manager, Faculty of Arts	Melbourne University	HEWS 9	A tertiary qualification with extensive management experience or extensive experience at a management level, in the tertiary sector or in another complex organisation.		2011

School Manager, Faculty of Information Technology	Monash	HEWS 9	A postgraduate qualification and extensive management experience or extensive management expertise and extensive management experience in the tertiary sector or in another complex organisation		2011
General Manager, Faculty of Science	UNSW	Executive	Tertiary qualifications and/or relevant senior management experience.		2012
General Manager, Faculty of Engineering	UNSW	Executive	Tertiary qualifications with extensive relevant senior management experience.		2012
Faculty General Manager, Faculty of Medicine	UNSW	Executive	Tertiary qualifications with extensive relevant senior management experience in a University or similar large and complex organisation.		2011
General Manager, Australian School of Business	UNSW	Executive	Tertiary qualifications with relevant senior management experience.		2012
Business School General Manager, UTS Business School	UTS	Executive	Undergraduate degree in an appropriate discipline.	Postgraduate degree	2012
Faculty Manager, Faculty of Law	UTS	Executive	Degree in an appropriate discipline.  Postgraduate qualifications in an area relevant to one of the major accountabilities would be an advantage.		2011



## List of References

ACCC, 2007, 'Definition of a profession', viewed 15 June 2008,

<http://www.accc.gov.au/content/index.phtml/itemId/277772>

Albert, S. & Whetten, D. A. 1985, 'Organizational Identity', *Research in Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 7, pp.263-295.

Altbach, P.G., 1998, *Comparative Higher Education: Knowledge, the University, and Development*, Greenwich, Conn.

Altbach, P.G. & Lewis, L.S. 1996, 'The Academic Profession in International Perspective', in P.G. Altbach & E.L. Boyer (eds.), *The International Academic Professional Portraits of Fourteen Countries*, The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, New York.

Anderson, M.W. 2004, 'The Metrics of Workforce Planning', *Public Personnel Management*, Vol. 33, No. 4, pp.364-379.

Angrosino, M.V. & Mays de Perez, K.A. 2000, 'Rethinking Observation from Method to Context', in N. K. Denzin and Y. S. Lincoln (ed.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Archer, M. S. 2007, *Making our way through the world: Human Reflexivity and Social Mobility*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Cambridge University Press.

Alvesson, M. 2003 'Methodology for Close up studies: Struggling with Closeness and Closure', *Higher Education*, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp.167-193.

Alvesson, M. and Sveningsson, S. 2011, 'Identity work in consultancy projects: ambiguity and distribution of credit and blame', in C.N. Candlin and J. Crichton (eds.), *Discourses of Deficit*, Palgrave MacMillan, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., pp.159-174.

Alvesson, M. Ashcraft, K.L. & Thomas, R. 2008, 'Identity Matters: Reflections on the Construction of Identity Scholarship in Organization Studies', *Organization*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp.5-28.

ARC, 2008, Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) Initiative, Commonwealth of Australia, Consultation Paper, June, ISBN 978-0-9581800-23  
[http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/ERA\\_ConsultationPaper.pdf](http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/ERA_ConsultationPaper.pdf)

Ashcraft, K.L. & Alvesson, M.A. 2007, 'The Moving Targets of Dis/Identifications: Wrestling with the Reality of Social Construction'. *Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the European Group for Organization Studies*, Vienna, Austria.

Ashforth, B. E. & Mael, F. 1989, 'Social Identity Theory and the Organization', *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 14, No. 1, pp.20-39.

Balthazard, P.A., Cooke, R.A. & Potter, R. E. 2006, 'Dysfunctional culture, dysfunctional organization: Capturing the behavioural norms that form organizational culture and drive performance', *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, Vol. 21, No 8, pp.709-732.

Baumeister, R.F. 1991, *The Meaning of Life*, The Guilford Press, 1<sup>st</sup> ed.

Beach, D. M & Reinhartz, J. 2000, *Supervisory leadership: focus on instruction*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Boston, Massachusetts: Allyn and Bacon.

B-HERT, 2007, Business Higher Education Round Table, The Business Graduate of Tomorrow Conference, David Murray (keynote speakers)

<http://svc028.wic020v.server-web.com/activities-archives/2007-03-14/index.html>

Bessant, B. 1995, 'Corporate management and its penetration of university administration and government', *Australian Universities Review*, Vol. 1, pp.59-62.

Blasi, A. & Glodis, K. 1995, 'The Development of Identity. A critical analysis from the perspective of the self as subject', *Development Review*, Vol. 15, pp.404-433.

Boedker, C., Vidgen, R., Meagher, K., Cogin, J., Mouritsen, J. & Runnalls, J.M. 2011, *Leadership, Culture and Management Practices of High Performing Workplaces in Australia: The High Performing Workplaces Index*, The Society for Knowledge Economics, Oct.

Bolman, L.G. & Deal, T.E. 2011, *Reframing Organisations: Artistry, Choice, and Leadership*, 3rd, ed. Jossey-Bass, John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Chapter 6.

Bourner, T., Bowden, R. & Laing, S. 2001, 'Professional Doctorates in England', *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 26, No. 1, pp.65-83.

Bradley, D., Noonan, P., Nugent, H. & Scales, B. 2008, *Review of Australian Higher Education Final Report*, Commonwealth of Australia, 978-0-642-77805-5, [www.deewr.gov.au/he\\_review\\_finalreport](http://www.deewr.gov.au/he_review_finalreport)

Branine, M. & Glover, I, 1997, 'Ageism in work and employment thinking about connection', *Personal Review*, Vol. 26, Issue 4, pp.233-244.

Bryman, A. 1984, 'The Debate about Quantitative and Qualitative Research: A Question of Method or Epistemology?' *The British Journal of Sociology*, Vol. XXXV, No. 1, pp.75-92.

Burns, R.B. 2000, *Introduction to Research Methods*, Frenchs Forest: Pearson Education.

Calabrese, R.L. & Shoho, A. 2000, 'Recasting educational administration programs as learning organizations', *The International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol. 14, Issue 5, pp.210-215

Callero, P. 2003, 'The sociology of self', *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol. 29, pp.115-134.

Charmaz, K. 2006, *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide through Qualitative Analysis*, Sage, London, 1<sup>st</sup>ed.

Charmaz, K. & Mitchell, R.G. 2001, 'Grounded Theory in Ethnography', in P. Atkinson, A. Coffey, S. Delmont, & J. Lofland (eds.), *Handbook of Ethnography*, London: Sage.

Chen, S. 2007, 'The Features and Trends of University Development in Australia and China', *Higher Education Policy*, Vol. 20, pp.207-216.

Churchman. D. 2004, *Voices of the Academy: academics' responses to a corporatised university*.

Churchman, D. 2006, 'Institutional Commitments, Individual Compromises: Identity-related responses to compromise in an Australian university', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 28, No. 1, March, pp.3-15.

Clark, B. 1998, 'The entrepreneurial university: demand and response', *Tertiary Education and Management*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp.5-16.

Clark, M. C. & Payne, R.L. 1997, 'The Nature and Structure of Workers' Trust in Management', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, Vol. 18, No. 3, May, pp.205-224.

Coady, T. 2000, 'Universities and the ideals of inquiry', in. T. Coady (ed.) 'Why universities matter', St. Leonards, New South Wales, Australia: Allen & Unwin, pp.3-25.

Coaldrake, P. 1995, 'Implications for higher education of the public sector reform agenda', *Australian Universities Review*, Vol. 1, pp.38-40.

Coaldrake, P. 2000, 'Reflections on the Repositioning of the Government's Approach to Higher Education, or I'm dreaming of a white paper', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 22, Issue 1, May, pp.9-21.

Coaldrake, P. & Stedman, L. 1999, 'Academic Work in the Twenty-first Century: Changing roles and policies', 99H Occasional Paper Series, Higher Education Division, Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs. Sept.

Conway, M. 1998, 'Academics and Administrators: Competitive Collaborators?' *Journal of Institutional Research in Australia*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp.26-35.

Cummins, R.A. 2011, 'Subjective Wellbeing as key to a health society', *Academy of the Social Science*, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp.51-60.

Davis, T & Landa, T, 1999, 'The Trust Deficit', *Canadian Manager*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp.10-27.

Dawkins J.S. 1987, Higher Education a policy discussion paper, Commonwealth of Australia.

De Boer, H. & Goedegebuure, L. 1995, 'Decision-making in Higher Education: a comparative perspective', *Australian Universities Review*, pp.41-47.

Dearlove, J. 2002, 'A Continuing Role for Academics: The Governance of UK Universities in the Post-Dearing Era', *Higher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 56, No. 3, pp.257-275.

Deem, R. 1998, 'New Managerialism and Higher Education: the management of performances and cultures in universities in the United Kingdom', *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp.47-70.

Department of Employment, Education and Training, 1988, 'The challenge for higher education in Australia, (Dawkins, J, Minister) AGPS, Canberra.

Department of Education, Science and Training, 'Bologna Declaration 1999'.  
<http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/GovernmentActivities/BolognaProcess/default.htm>

Department for Education and Skills, 1998. <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/>

Department of Education, Science and Training, 2002-2006, 'Higher Education at the Crossroads and Setting Firm Foundations: Financing Australian Higher education', and 'Meeting the Challenges: the Governance and Management of Universities', (Nelson, B. Minister), Canberra.

Department of Employment and Workplace Relations, 2005, '*Workforce Tomorrow: Adapting to a more diverse Australian labour market*', ISBN 0 64232 523 5

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2007, Better Universities Renewal Fund,

<http://www.innovation.gov.au/HIGHEREDUCATION/FUNDING/BETTERUNIVERSITIESRENEWALFUNDING/Pages/default.aspx>

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2011, (<http://www.deewr.gov.au/HigherEducation/Resources/Pages/FundingUndergraduateStudents.aspx>)

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2011, Ageing and the Barriers to Labour Force Participation in Australia, December, ISBN 978-0-9871249-3-7

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2011, Higher Education teaching and learning costs, Deloitte Access Economics. August.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2012, 'Skill Shortage Australia', [www.deewr.gov.au/skillshortages](http://www.deewr.gov.au/skillshortages), ISSN 1839-5883

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, 2012, Australian Job, ISSN 1832-7230.

Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, Finance 2010, Financial Reports of Higher Education Providers November 2011. ISBN: 978-0-642-78128-4.

Department of Education, Science and Training, 2005, Number of Full-time and Fractional Full-time Staff by Current Duties Classification from 1995 to 2005. Selected Higher Education Staff Statistics.

Denscombe, M. 2007, *The Good Research Guide for small-scale social research projects*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Open University Press, pp.17-18.

Denzin, N.K. & Lincoln, Y. S. 2000, *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 2<sup>nd</sup>.ed. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Dill, D.D. 1999, 'Academic accountability and university adaptation: The architecture of an academic learning organization', *Higher Education*, Vol. 38, pp.127-154.

Dobson, I. R. 2000, 'Them and Us – General and Non-General Staff in Higher Education', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp.203-210.

Dobson, I.R. & Conway, M. 2003, 'Fear and Loathing in University Staffing: The Case of Australia Academic and General Staff', *Higher Education Management and Policy*, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp.123-133.



Dooley, L.M. 2000, 'Academic Business Affairs', *New Directions for Higher Education*, N. 111, Fall, pp.95-101.

Ellis, C. & Bochner, A.P. 2000, 'Autoethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity: Researcher as subject', in N.K. Denzin & Y.S. Lincoln (ed.), *The handbook of qualitative research*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Newbury Park, CA:Sage, pp.733-768.

Emerson, R. & Pollner, M. 2001, 'Constructing participant/observation relations', in R. Emerson (ed.), *Contemporary Field Research: Perspectives and Formulations*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Prospect Heights, Illinois.

Emerson, R.N., Fretz, R.I. & Shaw, L. L. 2011, *Writing Ethnographic Fieldnotes*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., The University of Chicago, Chapter 1.

Eraut, M., Alderton, J., Cole, G. & Senker, P. 2002, 'The Impact of the manager on learning in the workplace', in Fiona, Reeve (eds.) *Supporting Lifelong Learning: Organising Learning*, Chapter 6.

Erez, M. & Earley, P.C. 1993, *Culture, Self-identity, and Work*, Oxford University Press, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Chapter 10.

Eveline, J. 2004, *Ivory Basement Leadership: Power and Invisibility in the Changing University*, University of Western Australia Press.

Ferguson, H. 2009, *Self-Identity and Everyday Life*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Routledge: New York, Chapter 3.

Financial Services Council 2012, Attitudes to older workers, Jan, Westfield Wright Pty Sydney, viewed on April 2012,

[www.fsc.org.au/.../2012\\_3001\\_older%20workers\\_report\\_4464.pdf](http://www.fsc.org.au/.../2012_3001_older%20workers_report_4464.pdf)

Fiorelli, J.S. & Margolis, H. 1993, 'Managing and understanding large system change: guidelines for executives and change agents', *Organization Development Journal*, Vol. 11, No. 3, pp.1-13.

Fisher, S. 1994, *Stress in Academic Life: The mental assembly line*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Folger, R. & Skarlicki, D.P, 1999, 'Unfairness and resistance to change: hardship as mistreatment', *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Vol. 12, No. 1, pp.35-50.

Folkman, S. Lazarus, R.S. Gruen, R.J. and DeLongis, A. 1986, 'Appraisal, Coping, Health Status, and Psychological Symptoms', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 50, No. 3, pp.571-579.

Ford, R.C., McLaughlan, F.S. & Newstorm, J.W. 2003, 'Questions and Answers about Fun at Work', *Human Resource Planning*, Vol. 26, Issue 4, pp.18-33.

Forgasz, H.J. & Leder, G.C. 2006. 'Academic Life: Monitoring Work Patterns and Daily Activities', *The Australian Educational Researchers*, Vol. 33, No. 1, April.

Frolich, N., Schmidt, E.K. & Rosa, M.J. 2010. 'Funding Systems for higher education and their impacts on institutional strategies and academia', *International Journal of Educational Management*, Vol. 24, No. 1, pp.7-21.

Furnham, A. 2005, *The psychology of behaviour at work: The Individual in the Organisation*, Psychology Press, UK, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

Gabarro, J. 1979, 'Socialization at the top: How CEOs and subordinates evolve interpersonal contracts', *Organizational Dynamics*, Vol. 7, No 3, pp.3-23.

Gabarro, J.J. 1990, 'The development of working relationship', in J.R. Galegher, R.E. Kraut, C. Egidio (eds.), *Intellectual teamwork: Social and technological foundations of cooperative work*, Hillsdale, NJ, England: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc, pp.79-110.

Gallagher, M. 2010, *The Accountability for Quality Agenda in Higher Education*, October.

Gallagher, M. 2012, 'Plot loss in Australian Higher Education Policy', *Conference on Institutional Performance in Higher Education*, Melbourne, 16 May 2012.

Garvin, D.A. 1993, 'Building a Learning Organisation', *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 71, Issue 4, pp.78-84.

Glaser, B.G. & Strauss, A.L. 1967, *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*, Chicago: Aldine Publ. Co.

Gladman, S. 2007, 'Union warning; staff cuts loom', *Geelong Advertise*, 7 April 2007. Viewed on 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2013, [http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p\\_product=AUNB&p\\_theme=aggregated5&p\\_action=doc&p\\_docid=11A2EF89EA11DA08&p\\_docnum=3&p\\_queryname=1](http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AUNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=11A2EF89EA11DA08&p_docnum=3&p_queryname=1)

Gergen, K. 1971, *The Concept of Self, In The Person in Psychology*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Holt, Rinehart and Winston Inc.

Gergen, K. 1991, *The Saturated Self: Dilemmas of Identity in Contemporary Life*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Basic Books. New York.

Gergen, K.J. & Gergen, M.M. 1983, 'Narratives of the Self', in T.R. Sarbin & K.E. Scheibe (eds.), *Studies in Social Identity*, Praeger, pp.254-273.

Gillsepie, N.A., Walsh, M., Winefield, A.H., Dua, J. & Stough, C. 2001, 'Occupational Stress in Universities: Staff perceptions of the causes, consequences and moderations of stress', *Work and Stress*, Vol. 15, No.1, pp.53-72.

Goode, W.J. & Hatt, P.K. 1952, 'The case Study', in W.J. Good & P.K. Hatt (eds.), *Methods of Social Research*, New York: McGraw-Hill, pp.330-340.

Goren, B. 2007, Response to Your Voice Survey Staff Forum 2007, National Tertiary Education Industry Union, 5 September, viewed on July 2012.

Gornitzka, A. & Larsen, I.M. 2004, 'Towards Professionalisation Restructuring of Administrative work force in Universities', *Higher Education*, Vol. 47, pp.455-471.

Gornitzka, A., Kyvik, S. & Larsen, I.M. 1998, 'The Bureaucratisation of Universities', *Minerva*, Vol. 36, pp.21-47.

Gothey, R. & Jones, G. 1996, 'What holds the Modern Company Together?' *Harvard Business Review*, Vol. 74, No. 6, pp.133-48.

Group of Eight, University Admissions, Policy Note No. 3, Feb 2012.

Gumport, R.J. 2000, 'Academic restructuring: Organisational Change and institutional imperatives', *Higher Education*, Vol. 39, pp.67-91.

Hall, B. 2012, 'Fears unis will shut under new reforms', SMH, March 8. Viewed on 3 July 2012, <http://www.smh.com.au/opinion/political-news/fears-unis-will-shut-under-new-reforms-20120307-1uklj.html>

Hall, S. 2000, 'Who needs 'Identity'', in du Gay P., Evan, J. & Redman, P (eds.), *Identity: A reader*, Sage Publication Inc., pp.15-30.

Hare, J. 2012, 'ANU cuts 150 jobs in \$40m cost push', *The Australian*, 27 March 2012, viewed on March 2012, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/anu-cuts-150-jobs-in-40m-cost-push/story-e6frgcjx-1226310730372>

Harman, G. 2000, 'Academic Work and Values in Australian Higher Education, 1977-1997', *Academic Work and Life*, Vol. 1, pp.73-115.

Harman, G. 2003, *A decade of Change, National report on Higher Education in Australia*, Department of Education, Science and Training.

Harvey, L. 1997, *Graduate's work: organisational change and student attributes*. Center for Research into Quality, University of Birmingham.

Harvey, L. 2000a, 'New realities: the relationship between higher education and employment', *Tertiary Education and Management*, Vol. 6, pp.3-17.

Hatch, N.W. & Dyer, J.H. 2004, 'Human Capital and Learning as a Source of Sustainable Competitive Advantage', *Strategic Management Journal*, Vol. 25, pp.1155-1178.

Henkel, M. 2007, 'Shifting Boundaries and the Academic Profession', Kogan, M. and Teichler, U (eds) *Key Challenges to the Academic Profession*, UNESCO Forum on Higher Education Research and Knowledge, International Center for Higher Education Research Kassel, WERKSTATTBERICHT – 65, ISBN 3-928172-XXXXXXXXXX, pp.191-204.

Houston, D., Meyer L.H. & Paewai, S. 2006, 'Academic Staff Workloads and Job Satisfaction: Expectations and values in academe', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 28, No.1, pp.17-30.

Johns, C. 2009, *Becoming a Reflective Practitioner*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Wiley-Blackwell,

Johnsrud, L.K. 2002, 'Faculty members' moral and their intention to leave: A multilevel explanation', *Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 73, No. 4, July/August, pp.518-542.

Johnsrud, L.K. 2002, 'Measuring the Quality of Faculty and Administrative Worklife: Implications for College and University Campuses', *Research in Higher Education*, Vol. 43, No. 3, June, pp.379-395.

Johnsrud, L. K. 2003, 'Higher education support personnel: The fear of speaking out', *The National Education Association (NEA) 2003 Almanac of Higher Education*, Washington, D.C.: NEA, pp.109-118.

Johnsrud, L. K. 2004, 'Higher education support personnel: Demographics and Work Life Issues', *The National Education Association (NEA) 2004 Almanac of Higher Education*, Washington, D.C.: NEA, pp.105-126.

Johnsrud, L.K. & Rosser, V.J. 1999, 'College and University Midlevel Administrators: Explaining and Improving Their Morale', *The Review of Higher Education*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp.121-141.

Johnsrud, L.K. & Rosser, V.J. 2000, Editor's notes, in L.K. Johnsrud & V.J. Rosser (eds.), 'Understanding the work and career paths of midlevel administrator', *New Directions for Higher Education*, No. 111, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp.5-13.

Johnsrud, L.K., Heck, R.H. & Rosser, V.J. 2000, 'Morale Matters: Midlevel Administrators and their intent to leave', *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 71, No. 1, pp.34-59.

Kamaluddin A. & Rahman, R.A. 2009, 'Enhancing Organisation Effectiveness through Human, Relational and Structural Capital: An Empirical Analysis,' *Malaysian Accounting Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1, pp.1-17.

Kapitzke, C. 1998, 'Narrative on a Doctoral Narrative: Reflections on Postgraduate Study and Pedagogy', *Australian Educational Researcher*, Vol. 25, No. 2, August, pp.95-111

Karl, K.A. & Peluchette, J.V. 2006, 'Does workplace fun buffer the impact of emotional exhaustion on job satisfaction? A study of health care workers', *Journal of Behavioural and Applied Management*, Vol. 7, No. 2, pp.128-142.

Katz, D. & Kahn, R. L. 1978, *The Social Psychology of Organizations*, 2nd ed., New York: Wiley Addison-Wesley Pub.

Kerr, C. 1987, 'A Critical Age in the University World: accumulated heritage versus modern imperatives', *European Journal of Education*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp.183-193.

Kerr, C. 1994, *Higher Education cannot Escape History: Issues for the Twenty-First Century*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Ketchell, M. 2002, 'RMIT cuts staff, costs in budget squeeze', *The Age*, Nov 7, viewed 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2013, [http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p\\_product=AUNB&p\\_theme=aggregated5&p\\_action=doc&p\\_docid=10546A35C866A101&p\\_docnum=2&p\\_queryname=7](http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AUNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=10546A35C866A101&p_docnum=2&p_queryname=7)

Kogan, M. 2007, 'The Academic Profession and its interface with Management', Kogan, M. and Teichler, U (eds) *Key Challenges to the Academic Profession*, UNESCO Forum on Higher Education Research and Knowledge, International Center for Higher Education Research Kassel, WERKSTATTBERICHT – 65, ISBN 3-928172-XXXXXXXX, pp.159-174.

Kuhn, T. 2006, A 'Demented Work Ethic' and a 'Lifestyle Firm': Discourse, Identity, and workplace Time Commitments', *Organization Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 9, pp.1339-1358.

Lane, B. 2011, 'Macquarie looks at cuts to jobs, hours', *The Australian*, 16 November 2011, viewed on January 2012 16, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/macquarie-looks-at-cuts-to-jobs-hours/story-e6frgcjx-1226196022773>



Lawler, S. 2008, *Identity, Sociology Perspectives*, 1<sup>st</sup>ed, Cambridge: Polity Press. Chapter 1.

Lawler, III E.E. 2000, *Rewarding Excellence: Pay Strategies for the New Economy*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. John Wiley & Sons, Introduction.

Lawler III, E.E. & Hall, D.T. 1970, 'Relationship of Job Characteristics to Job Involvement, Satisfaction, and Intrinsic Motivation', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 54, No. 4, pp.305-312.

Leader, 2006, 'University budget – Road progress', *Newcastle Herald*, 16 Dec, viewed on 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2013, [http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p\\_product=AUNB&p\\_theme=aggregated5&p\\_action=doc&p\\_docid=11613FD6740BFD68&p\\_docnum=1&p\\_queryname=5](http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AUNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=11613FD6740BFD68&p_docnum=1&p_queryname=5)

Leslie, L.L. & Rhoades, G. 1995, 'Rising Administrative Costs: Seeking explanations', *The Journal of Higher Education*, Vol. 66, No. 2, pp.187-212.

Lewis, J. & Richie, J., 2003, 'Generalising from Qualitative Research', in J. Ritchie & J. Lewis (eds.) *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*, Sage: London; Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.

Lewis, D., Bebbington, A.J., Batterbury, S.P.J., Shah, A., Olson, E., Siddiqi, M.S and Duvall, S. 2003, 'Practice, Power and Meaning Frameworks for Studying Organisational Culture in Multi-agency Rural Development Projects', *Journal of International Development*, Vol. 15, No 5, pp.541-557.

Liebmann, J.D. 1986, 'Non-academic employees in higher education: A historical overview', *Paper presented at the Annual Forum of the Association for Institutional Research* (26<sup>th</sup> Orlando, FL, June 22-25).

Lieberman, M. 2005, 'Principles, processes, and puzzles of social cognition: An introduction for the special issue on social cognitive neuroscience', *Neuroimage*, Vol. 28, pp.745-756.

Lincoln, Y.S. & Guba, E.G. 1985, *Naturalistic Inquiry*, Carlif: Sage.

Linde, C. 1993, *Life Stories: The Creation of Coherence*, Oxford University Press.

Linde, C. 2001, 'Narrative and Social Tacit Knowledge', *Journal of Knowledge Management, Special Issue on Tacit Knowledge Exchange and Active Learning*, Vol. 5, No. 2, pp.1-16.

Linstead, S. 2004, 'Managing Culture', in S. Linstead, L. Fulop and S. Lilley (eds.) *Management and Organization: A Critical Text*, Houndmills: Palgrave, pp.93-122.

Lomax-Smith, J., Watson, L. & Webster, B., 2011, *Higher Education Base Funding Review Final Report Oct 2011*. [www.deewr.gov.au/BaseFundingReview](http://www.deewr.gov.au/BaseFundingReview)

Lunn, S. 2012, 'Employers get \$1000 bonus for taking an older workers', *The Australian*, 18 April. Viewed on 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2013, [http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p\\_product=AUNB&p\\_theme=aggregated5&p\\_action=doc&p\\_docid=13E3621404FEDAB8&p\\_docnum=1&p\\_queryname=3](http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AUNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=13E3621404FEDAB8&p_docnum=1&p_queryname=3)

Lyon, P. & Pollard, D. 1997, 'Perceptions of the older employee: is anything really changing?' *Personnel Review*, Vol. 28, No. 4, pp.245-257.

Maiolo, A. 2012, 'Wollongong mergers outlines', 18 Sept, Vol. 22, No. 18, p4.  
[www.campusreview.com.au](http://www.campusreview.com.au)

Maiolo, A. 2012, 'Qld uni merger moves ahead', 2 Oct, Vol.22, No. 19, p.4,  
[www.campusreview.com.au](http://www.campusreview.com.au)

Marginson, S. 1997a, 'Competition and contestability in Australian higher education, 1987-1997', *Australian Universities Review*, Vol. 1, pp.5-14.

Marginson, S. 1997b, 'Steering from a distance: Power relations in Australian Higher Education', *Higher Education*, Vol. 34, pp.63-80.

Marginson, S. 1997c, '*Educating Australia: Government, Economy and Citizen since 1960*', 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Cambridge University Press. New York. Chapter 3.

Marginson, S. 1998, 'Rethinking Academic Work in the Global Context', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 22, No. 1, pp.23-35.

Marginson, S. 2000, 'Rethinking Academic Work in the Global Era', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 22, Issue 1, pp.23-35.

Marginson, S. 2006, 'Dynamics of national and global competition in higher education', *Higher Education*, 52, pp.1-39.

Marginson, S. 2007, Global Position and Position Taking: The Case of Australia, *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp.5-32.

Marginson, S. & Considine, M. 2000, *The Enterprise University: Power, Governance and Reinvention in Australia*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Cambridge University Press, UK

Mayer, R.C & Gavin, M.B. 2005, 'Trust in Management and performance: Who minds the shop while the employees watch the boss?' *Academy of Management Journal*, Vol. 48, No. 5, pp.874-888.

McInnis, C., 1998, 'Academic and Professional Administrators in Australian Universities: Dissolving Boundaries and New Tensions', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Nov, Vol. 20, Issue 2, pp.161-174.

McInnis, C. 2000, 'Changing Academic Work Roles: the everyday realities challenging quality teaching', *Quality in Higher Education*, 6, pp.143-152.

McWilliam, E., Taylor, P.G., Thomson, P., Green, B., Maxwell, T., Wildy, H. & Simons, D. 2002, 'Doctoral education and the knowledge economy', in *Research Training in doctoral programs: what can be learned from professional doctorates?* Evaluations and Investigations Program, Commonwealth of Australia, pp.27-37.

Mead, G.H. 1934, *Mind Self and Society*, Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press.

Merriam, S.B. 1998, *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education*, Jossey-Bass Publ.

Mills, C.W. 1959, *The Sociological Imagination, Appendix*, New York, Oxford University Press.

Mills, C.W. 2010, 'Private Troubles, Public Issues', in A. Giddens and P. W. Sutton (eds.), *Sociology: Introductory Reading*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Polity Press UK, pp.5-8.

Miles, M.B. & Huberman, A.M. 1984, *Qualitative Data Analysis: A Sourcebook of New Methods*. Newbury Park, Calif: Sage.

Mintzberg, H. 1980, 'Structure in 5'S: A synthesis of the research on organization design', *Management Science*, Vol. 26, No. 3, pp.322-341.

Molony, J. 2000, 'Australian Universities Today', in. T. Coady (ed.), *Why universities matter*, pp.72-84, St. Leonards, New South Wales, Australia: Allen & Unwin.

Moreno, Jr V. 2001, 'On the social implications of organizational reengineering A phenomenological study of individual experiences of BPR processes', *Information Technology*, Vol. 12, No. 4, pp.359-388.

Morson, G. S. & Emerson, C. 1990, *Mikhail Bakhtin – Creation of a Prosaics*, Chapter 4 Metalinguistics: The Dialogue of Authorship 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Stanford, Stanford University Press. pp.121-171.

National Tertiary Education Industry Union, 2007, NTEU Higher Education Survey Summary 1.

Neuman, W.L. 1997, *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Allyn and Bacon, USA.

Ng, S. 2007, 'University Staff: Learn to Dance Again: A Literature Review', *The 7th Annual Pacific Employment Relations Association Conference*, 14-16 November, ISBN 1876851325

Ng, S. & Spooner, K., 2007 'From IR to HRM: Thank God for AACSB', *NZJER* Vol. 32, No. 2, pp.69-86.

Ng, S. & Spooner, K. 2007, 'Actioning the Faculty's Strategic Goal: Developing Work Ready Graduates Through the study of HRM', *The 7th Annual Pacific Employment Relations Association Conference*, 'Regional, National, Global: Emerging Trends in Employment Relations', South Australia, 14-16 November 2007.

Norton, A. 2007, 'Government discourages efficiency', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 31 Oct, viewed 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2013, [http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p\\_product=AUNB&p\\_theme=aggregated5&p\\_action=doc&p\\_docid=11C9D4DDEFFB4788&p\\_docnum=1&p\\_queryname=4](http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AUNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=11C9D4DDEFFB4788&p_docnum=1&p_queryname=4)

NSW Auditor-General's Report Volume Two 2011 Universities Overview. pp.20-45. [www.audit.nsw.gov.au/.../191/01\\_Vol\\_2\\_2011\\_Full.pdf.aspx](http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/.../191/01_Vol_2_2011_Full.pdf.aspx)

O'Keefe, B. 2004, 'Staff cuts loom large – uni places: diving the spoils', *The Australian*, 7 July, viewed on 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2013, [http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p\\_product=AUNB&p\\_theme=aggregated5&p\\_action=doc&p\\_docid=103AB3FC30F45EE3&p\\_docnum=1&p\\_queryname=2](http://infoweb.newsbank.com.ezproxy.lib.uts.edu.au/iw-search/we/InfoWeb?p_product=AUNB&p_theme=aggregated5&p_action=doc&p_docid=103AB3FC30F45EE3&p_docnum=1&p_queryname=2)

OECD 2010, Trends Shaping Education 2010, ISBN 978-92-64-09004 (pdf), p.56, (access on 26 Dec 2012 5:38pm) <http://www.oecd.org/edu/cei/trendsshapingeducation2010.htm>

Ortmann, A. & Squire, R. 2000, 'A game-theoretic explanation of the administrative lattice in institutions of higher learning', *Journal of Economic Behaviour and Organisation*, Vol. 43, pp.377-391.

Pate, J., Beaumont, P. & Pryce, G. 2009, 'Organisations and the issue of multiple identities: Who loves you baby?' *VINE*, Vol. 39, Issue 4, pp.319-338.

Patton, M.Q. 1980, *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*, Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications

Perkins, M. 2009, 'Battered Melbourne Uni slashes 220 jobs', *The Age*, July 29, viewed on March 2012, <http://www.theage.com.au/national/education/battered-melbourne-uni-slashes-220-jobs-20090728-e075.html>

Pickersgill, R., Barneveld, K.V. & Bearfield, S. 1998, 'General and Academic Work: Are They Different?', A discussion paper on current practices and options for changing work organisation and enterprise bargaining, DEETYA, May, Commonwealth of Australia.

Polivy, J. 1998, 'The Effects of behavioural inhibition: Integrating Internal Cues, Cognition, Behavior, and Affect', *Psychological Inquiry*, Vol. 9, No. 3, pp.181-204.

Pratt, M.G. & Foreman, P.O. 2000, 'Classifying managerial Responses to Multiple Organizational Identities', *Academy of Management Review*, Vol. 25, No. 1, pp.18-42.

Pullen, A. & Linstead, S. 2005, 'Introduction: organising identity', in A. Pullen & S. Linstead (eds.), *Organization and Identity*, Routledge Studies in Business Organizations and Networks, Chapter 1, pp.1-19.

Punch, K. F. 2004, *Introduction to Social Research: Quantitative and Qualitative Approaches*, 7th ed. Sage Publications, UK.

Raines, C. 1997, Generations at Work: Managing Generation X. Retrieved March 7, 2008, from ([http://www.generationsatwork.com/articles\\_genx.php](http://www.generationsatwork.com/articles_genx.php)).

Ramlall, S.L. 2006, 'Strategic HR Management Creates Value at Target: Competitive Strategy', *Journal of Organisational Excellent*, Spring, pp.57-62

Ran, B. & Golden, T.J. 2011, 'Who are we? The social construction of organizational identity through sense-exchanging', *Administration and Society*, Vol. 43, No. 4, pp.417-445.

Redman, E. 2011, 'Melbourne Uni 'restructure' will cut expertise: staff', *Crikey*, 29 March, viewed on March 2012,  
<http://www.crikey.com.au/2011/03/29/melbourne-uni-restructure-will-cut-expertise-staff/>

Reed-Danahay, D. 1997, 'Introduction', in D. Reed-Danahay (ed.), *Auto/ethnography: Rewriting the Self and the Social*, Explorations in Anthropology, Oxford:Berg, pp.1-17.

Reissner, S.C. 2010, 'Change, meaning and identity at the workplace', *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Vol. 23, Issue 3, pp.287-299.



Renzl, B. 2008, 'Trust in management and knowledge sharing: The mediating effects of fear and knowledge documentation', *Omega (The International Journal of Management Science)*, Vol. 38, pp.206-220.

Ritchie, J., Spencer, L., & O'Connor, W. 2003, 'Carrying out Qualitative Analysis', in J. Ritchie & J. Lewis, J. (eds.), *Qualitative research practice: A guide for social science students and researchers*, Sage: London; Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.

Robinson, R. 2011, 'Suggested Model for Restructured Enabling Programs, Language Centre and Learning Skills Support, University Restructure Discussion Papers, Response 88, Response to University Restructure Feedback from the Senior Executive Retreat, 22 August 2011.

Rosenberg, J. 2012, 'Uni caught out trying to poach students using private database', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 6 January, viewed on 24<sup>th</sup> December 2012.

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/tertiary-education/uni-caught-out-trying-to-poach-students-using-private-database-20120105-1pmz5.html>

Rosser, V.J. 2000, 'Midlevel Administrators: What we know', *New Directions for Higher Education*, No. 111, pp.5-13.

Rosser, V.J. 2004, 'A national study on midlevel leaders in higher education: The unsung professionals in the academy', *Higher Education*, Vol. 48, pp.317-337.

Ryang, S. 2000, 'Ethnography or self-cultural anthropology?: Reflections on writing about ourselves', *Dialectical Anthropology*, Vol. 25, pp.297-320.

Schmitt, A., Borzillo, S. & Probst, G. 2012, 'Don't let knowledge walk away: Knowledge retention during employee downsizing', *Management Learning*, Vol. 43, Issue 1, pp.53-74.

Schwarzer, R. & Knoll, N. 2003, 'Positive coping: Mastering Demands and Searching for Meaning', in S.J. Lopez & C.R. Snyder (eds.), *Positive psychological assessment: A handbook of models and measures*. pp.393-409, Washington, DC American Psychological Association.

Scott, P. 1995, *The Meaning of Mass Higher Education*, Buckingham, SRHE/Open University Press.

Scott, R.A. 1976, 'Middle Management on campus: Training ground or wasteland', *Journal of the National Association of College Admissions Counsellors*, Vol. 20, No. 1, pp.38-40.

Scott, R. A. 1980, 'Lords, squires, and yeomen: Collegiate middle-managers in the US', *Higher Education*, Vol.9, No. 4, pp.385-398.

Shaw, R.B. 1997, *Trust in the Balance: Building Successful Organizations on Results, Integrity and Concern*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Shelley, L. 2010, 'Research Managers Uncovered: Changing Roles and 'Shifting Arenas' in the Academy', *Higher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 64, No. 1, pp.41-64.

Sheehy, B. 2010, 'Regulation by Markets and the Bradley Review of Australian higher education', *Australian Universities' Review*, Vol. 52, No. 1, pp.60-68.

Shotter, J. 1999, 'Life Inside dialogically structured mentalities: Bakhtin's and Voloshinov's account of our mental activities as out in the world between us', in John Rowan and Mick Cooper (ed.), *The Plural Self: Multiplicity in Everyday Life*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed., Chapter 4, Sage Publications, London. pp.71-92.

Solomon, R.C. 1998, 'The Moral Psychology of Business: Care and compassion in the corporation', *Business Ethics Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 3, Jul, pp.515-533.

Sommer, K.L. & Baumeister, R.F. 1998, 'The construction of meaning from life events: empirical studies of personal narratives', in P.T.P. Wong & P.S. Fry (eds.), *The Human Quest for Meaning*, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, London, pp.143-161.

Stake, R.E. 1995, *The Arts of Case Study Research*, Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.

Stevens, G.A. and Burley, J. 2003, 'Piloting the Rocket of Radical Innovation', *Research-Technology Management*, March-April, pp.16-25.

Stevenson, J.M. 2000, 'The Modern University Provost', *Education*, Winter, Vol. 121, No. 2, pp.347-349.

Stets, J.E. and Burke, P.J. 2003, 'A Sociological approach to self and identity', in M.R. Leary & J.P. Tangney (eds.), *Handbook of Self and Identity*, New York, Guildford Press, pp.128-152.

Stoltzfus, K. Stohl, C. & Seibold, D.R. 2011, 'Managing organisational change: paradoxical problems, solutions, and consequences', *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, Vol. 24, No. 3, pp.349-367.

Strachan, J. 2012, 'Uni Denies job cut plans', *The Canberra Times*, 25 March, viewed on March 2012, <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/uni-denies-job-cut-plans-20120324-1vrnt.html>

Sunstein, B.S & Chiseri-Strater, E. 2011, *FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Bedford Books, UK.

Swan, E. 2008, 'Let's not get too personal: critical reflection, reflexivity and the confessional turn', *Journal of European Industrial Training*, Vol. 32, No. 5, pp.385-399.

Sveningsson, S. & Alvesson, M. 2003, 'Managing managerial identities: Organizational fragmentation, discourse and identity struggle', *Human Relations*, Vol. 56, No. 10, pp.1163-1193.

Sverke, M., Hellgren, J. & Naswall, K. 2002, 'No Security: A Meta-Analysis and Review of Job Insecurity and its Consequences', *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology*, Vol. 7, Issue 3, pp.242-264.

Szekeres, J. 2004, 'The Invisible Workers', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 26, No.1, March, pp.7-22.

Szekeres, J. 2006, 'General Staff Experiences in the Corporate University', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 28, No. 2, July, pp.133-145.

Tajfel, H. 1981, *Human Groups and Social Categories: Studies in Social Psychology*, Cambridge: Cambridge University press, p.369.

Tajfel, H. 1982, 'Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations', *Annual Reviews Psychology*, Vol. 33, pp.1-39.

Tajfel, H. & Turner, J. C. 1986, 'The social identity theory of intergroup behaviour', in S. Worchel & W. G. Austin (eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations*, Chicago, IL: Nelson-Hall, pp.7-24.

Tay, L. 2011, 'Sydney University cuts staff to boost IT', *ITNEWS*, Nov 25, viewed on 30<sup>th</sup> Jan 2013, <http://www.itnews.com.au/News/281164,sydney-university-cuts-staff-to-boost-it.aspx>

Taylor. S.E. 1983, 'Adjustment to threatening events: A theory of cognitive adaptation', *American Psychologist*, Vol. 8, Issue 11, pp.1161-1173.

The Secretary of State for Education and Skills, 2003, *The Future of Higher Education*. London, UK: The Stationery Office Limited. p.86.

Trounson, A. 2011, 'Victoria University says new rules to blame for cuts', *The Australian*, 2 December, viewed on March 2012, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/higher-education/uni-says-new-rules-to-blame-for-cuts/story-e6frgcjx-1226211767412>

Turner, R. H. 2009, 'Role Taking: process versus conformity', in D. Brissett & C. Edgley (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.), *Life as Theatre: A Dramaturgical Sourcebook*, Transaction Publishers, New Jersey, Chapter 4, pp.85-100.

Turner, J. C. & Reynolds K.J. 2004, 'The social identity perspective in intergroup relations: theories, themes, and controversies', in M.B. Brewer, and M. Hewstone (ed.), *Self and Social Identity*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Blackwell Publishing, pp.259-277.

Warren, C.A.B. 2000, 'Writing the Other, Inscribing the Self', *Qualitative Sociology*, Vol. 33, No. 2, pp.183-199

Watson, T.J. 2008, 'Managing Identity: Identity Work, Personal Predicaments and Structural Circumstances', *Organization*, Vol. 15, No. 1, pp.121-143.

Wellington, J. & Sikes, P, 2006, 'A doctorate in tight compartment: Why do students choose a professional doctorate and what impact does it have on their personal and professional lives?' *Studies in Higher Education*, Vol. 31, pp.723-734.

Werbel, J.D. & Gilliland, S.W. 1999, 'Person-environment fit in the selection process', in G.R. Ferris (ed.), *Research in Personnel and Human Resource Management*, Stamford, CT:JAI Press, Vol. 17, pp.209-243.

West, P.W.A. 2006, 'Conflict in Higher Education and its Resolution', *Higher Education Quarterly*, 0951-5224, Vol. 60, No. 2, April, pp.187-197.

Whetten, D. A. 2006, 'Albert and Whetten Revisited Strengthening the concept of organizational identity', *Journal of Management Inquiry*, Sept, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp.219-234.

Whetten, D.A. & Godfrey, P.C. 1998, *Identity in Organizations: Building Theory Through Conservation*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Thousand Oaks, Calif., London: Sage

Whitchurch, C. 2004, 'Administrative Managers – A critical Link', *Higher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 58, No.4, Oct, pp.280-298.

Whitchurch, C. 2006, 'Who do they think they are? The changing identities of professional administrators and managers in UK higher education', *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, Vol. 28, No. 2, July, pp.159-171.

Whitchurch, C. 2007, 'The changing roles and identities of professional managers in UK higher education', *Perspectives*, Vol. 11, No. 2, April, pp.53-60.

Whitchurch, C. 2008, 'Shifting identities and blurring boundaries: The Emergence of Third Space Professional in UK Higher Education', *Higher Education Quarterly*, Vol. 62, Issue 4, pp.377-396.

Winefield, A.H., Gillespie, N., Stough, C., Dua, J., Hapuarachchi, J. & Boyd, C. 2003, 'Occupational Stress in Australia University Staff: Results from a National Survey', *International Journal of Stress Management*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp.51-63.

Wood, G., Wilkinson, A. & Harcourt, M. 2008, 'Age discrimination and working life: Perspectives and contestations – a review of the contemporary literature', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, Vol. 10, Issue 4, pp.425-442.

Woodward 1997, K. 1997, *Identity and difference*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. The Open University, London: Sage

Woodward, S. & Hendry, C. 2004, 'Leading and coping with change', *Journal of Change Management*, Vol. 4, No. 2, pp.155-183.

University of Technology, Sydney, Financial Reports 1987, 2007.

University of Technology, Sydney, 2007, Your Voice – UTS Staff Survey 2007.

University of Technology, Sydney 2012, HREC Guidelines for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students, UTS: Legislation, Rules & Policies, viewed 9<sup>th</sup> October <http://www.gsu.uts.edu.au/policies/hrecguide.html#contacts>.

Volkwein, J.F. & Zhou, Y. 2003, 'Testing a model of Administrative Job Satisfaction', *Research in Higher Education*, Vol. 44, No. 2, pp.149-171.

Zavan, M 2012, 'Restructure forces Victoria uni staff out of jobs', *Ninemsn*, 1<sup>st</sup> March, viewed on March 2012,

<http://news.ninemsn.com.au/national/2012/10/10/12/45/restructure-forces-victoria-uni-staff-out-of-jobs>

Zeffane, R. and Connell, J. 2003, 'Trust and HRM in the new millennium', *Int. Journal of Human Resource Management*, Vol. 14, No. 1, February, pp.3-11.

Yates, L 2004, 'What does Good Education Research look like?', Open University Press, McGraw Hill Education, Chapter 10. Who is the editor?

Yin, R.K. 2003, *Case Study Research Design and Methods*, 3rd Ed., UK, Sage.