

## **A Note from the Editors**

Employment relations in the tertiary education sector has been through enormous and contentious reforms, particularly in the area of managing, codifying and measuring academic performance. This special issue endeavours to capture the debates and issues surrounding the reforms and to examine the impact such reforms have had on academe's unique employment relations experiences.

In the first article, Bruce Curtis, continues his overview of the changes under the Performance-Based Research Fund (PBRF). He critiques earlier articles on the impact of the PBRF and notes that: "... the new fund provides both opportunities and dilemmas to the management and academic staff of universities". The article by Leanne Morris, Pauline Stanton, and Suzanne Young examines performance management within the context of universities. They argue that although the use of performance management as a developmental or monitoring/control tool is not clear, increasingly universities are strategically linking performance management with organisational goals. Of concern to academic staff is that "...performance appraisals are being used to reward staff in areas that were traditionally considered as standard working rights and conditions".

In the third article, Rupert Tipples, Branka Krivokapic-Skoko, and Grant O'Neill note that Australasian academics' psychological contracts have been changing and argue that it is necessary to understand the formation and content of academics' psychological contracts in order to understand and manage the work performance of academics. The article by Stephen Weller and Bernadine Van Gramberg reports on the findings of a survey that explored staff perceptions of change management in Australian universities with a view to gauging the effectiveness of workplace change provisions in Higher Education enterprise agreements. Their findings show that there was a divergence in the perceptions of management and union representatives on workplace change and highlight the limitations of existing processes to meet the expectations and demands of these key sector participants.

Stella Ng and Keri Spooner argue in the final article that while the introduction of performance measures associated with accreditation have added more pressure to an already over-stretched academic workforce, but these measures can also have targeted benefits when used to improve curriculum. Their findings showed that the AACSB accreditation requirements have modified academic resistance to change and have also resulted in a more meaningful teaching and learning experience.

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