

## Editorial Note

The March 1989 FAUSA Representative Council Meeting decided to change the editorial arrangements for the *Australian Universities' Review*. The journal is to be continued as a refereed publication specialising in education policy matters of concern to FAUSA's members. An Editorial Board of six persons has been created. Three of these positions are to be held by academics, one by a member of the FAUSA Executive and two by FAUSA Research Officers. The Editorial Board intends to appoint a guest editor for most editions of the journal.

There has been some delay to the second 1989 edition as a result of the changeover. The new arrangements have now been put in place. The current membership of the Board is: Dr Lesley Johnson (Chair), Associate Professor John Anwyl, Associate Professor Tony Coady, Professor

Ralph Hall, Mr Michael Bartos and Mr Simon Marginson.

Beginning in 1990, the guest editorship will also begin. Each issue of the journal will concentrate on one major theme, although under normal circumstances other articles will also appear. Potential contributors are therefore encouraged to submit papers for consideration, whether or not they focus on issues related to the areas advertised as being the themes of forthcoming issues.

We are pleased to announce that Associate Professor Ian Lowe will be guest editor for the next edition, focusing on issues of research policy (Volume 33, 1990, Number 1).

Editorial Board

## Tribute to John Anwyl

As Chair of the Editorial Board, I

Lesley Johnson

would also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to John Anwyl's work as Editor of the *Australian Universities' Review*. John Anwyl became Editor of the journal, then called *Vestis*, in 1978. He has brought to the journal his great expertise and commitment to issues of higher education. He has devoted considerable energy to making sure that the journal is recognised as a high quality publication at the same time as it seeks to make a valuable and lively contribution to debate about higher education issues in Australia. He has also been a devoted spokesperson for the journal. His speeches at FAUSA Council Meetings on matters to do with the journal have always impressed all who heard them for their great lucidity and eloquence. John Anwyl has made a great contribution to the journal and, hence, also to FAUSA.

source of material for the many people now involved in the whole complex debate. Similar issues are discussed for the Canadian scene by Tancred-Sheritt.<sup>2</sup>

A sensible starting point is to look at the 1987 situation of female participation in the traditional universities. Table 1 does this using three classifications of staff from an all-inclusive column of all academic staff, through to the tenured positions of lecturer and above to the third column listing only senior academic staff, that is readers, associate professors and professors. It shows the percentage of staff who are female in each category. Universities are listed in rank order according to each of these three classifications. Where distinction is possible only full-time staff are included. However, some universities incorporated full-time equivalents in their total figures and it has not been possible to distinguish full-time academics from those employed on a part-time basis. The inclusion of part-timers would undoubtedly serve to inflate the proportion of women at some institutions.

Whilst equal opportunity is clearly some distance away in all institutions, two very important factors are evident from even a glance at this table. One is that under the same legislative requirements and theoretically the same academic appointment procedures there are vast differences in the results achieved from one university to another. The other obvious conclusion to be drawn is the fact that substantial differences are evident between the various levels of appointment. In all universities, the proportion of females at the lower levels of the academic scale is much greater than at the higher levels. Appointment procedures seem to be moving more towards equal opportunity than are promotion procedures. Macquarie remains near the top of the ranking order on all three sets of figures and this appears to be one of the few universities to have achieved some consistency in both appointments and promotions.

Table 2 uses the same data but organises it differently. In this table comparisons between the three major academic levels are shown separately for either set. Thus, Table 2 does not show females as a proportion of the total as in Table 1 but it demonstrates how a reverse order of ranking applies within each set. Table 2 is presented in rank order giving the university with the highest percentage of its female staff at the top end and the university with the lowest proportion of its female staff in the senior levels at the bottom of the table. By organising the data differently, it shows that in every case females have much more difficulty in achieving promotion, or appointment at senior levels, than do males. The table clearly indicates the substantial disadvantage still suffered by female academics in comparison with their male colleagues.

In each institution there is a reverse order

TABLE 1:  
Proportion of Female Academic Staff in Australia's Initial 19 Universities, 1987

All academic staff		Lecturer and above		Reader, Associate Professor and Professor	
University	% of females	University	% of females	University	% of females
La Trobe	28.7	Macquarie	21.0	Deakin	16.6*
Macquarie	26.6	La Trobe	17.3	Macquarie	11.1
Griffith	22.9	Wollongong	16.7	Sydney	9.3
New England	22.7	ANU	15.9	ANU	7.4
Queensland	20.5	Griffith	15.8	La Trobe	6.1
Western Australia	20.3	Sydney	15.5	Western Australia	5.2
James Cook	20.2	James Cook	15.1	Wollongong	4.9
Monash	19.8	Melbourne	14.7	Melbourne	4.5
Sydney	19.8	Murdoch	13.7	Monash	4.3
Melbourne	19.7	Monash	13.2	Queensland	5.1
Wollongong	18.7	Queensland	12.9	Griffith	3.8
ANU	18.3	New England	12.6	New South Wales	3.8
Murdoch	18.1	Newcastle	12.5	James Cook	3.4
New South Wales	16.9	New South Wales	12.4	New England	3.4
Adelaide	15.7	Western Australia	12.2	Flinders	2.9
Tasmania	14.8	Tasmania	10.9	Adelaide	2.3
Newcastle	14.0	Flinders	9.9	Murdoch	2.0
Flinders	12.0	Deakin	9.2	Newcastle	1.8
Deakin	11.6	Adelaide	9.2	Tasmania	0.0

\* A meaningless figure because of very small numbers, namely five male professors and one female associate professor.

TABLE 2:  
Proportion of Female Staff at Each Level Compared with Males at Each Level, 1987

	Snr Tutor/Tutor		Snr Lecturer/Lecturer		Professor/ Assoc. Prof., Reader	
	% Female	% Male	% Female	% Male	% Female	% Male
Sydney	32.4	8.9	53.0	56.1	14.6	35.0
ANU	21.9	7.7	67.1	61.6	11.0	30.7
Macquarie	32.1	7.5	59.3	67.6	8.6	24.9
Flinders	27.0	8.9	64.9	53.9	8.1	37.2
Western Australia	48.2	5.0	44.6	60.8	7.2	34.2
Queensland	49.1	12.1	44.5	57.5	6.4	30.4
Melbourne	36.7	9.5	57.3	59.0	6.0	31.5
New South Wales	38.1	11.0	56.5	60.8	5.4	28.2
Monash	46.2	12.8	48.7	59.2	5.1	28.0
Deakin	25.0	3.3	70.0	93.5	5.0	3.2*
Wollongong	18.8	7.0	76.9	73.7	4.3	19.3
Adelaide	51.6	10.8	44.3	56.6	4.1	32.6
Newcastle	15.7	3.2	80.4	62.2	3.9	34.6
James Cook	41.1	15.8	55.3	58.9	3.6	25.3
Murdoch	35.7	10.5	61.9	63.2	2.4	26.3
New England	60.7	20.1	37.1	61.1	2.2	18.8
La Trobe	69.9	42.3	27.9	43.8	2.2	13.9
Griffith	47.3	15.8	50.9	70.6	1.8	13.6
Tasmania	35.2	9.3	64.8	66.8	0.0	23.9

\* As in the previous table this figure has little meaning.

of representation. Proportionately more males are found at the professional level compared with the tutor/demonstrator level whereas proportionately more of the female staff are located in the lowest status categories. Even at Sydney University, which

has the highest proportion of its female staff at the senior level, this is still less than half of the male proportion to achieve that promotion and at the junior levels four times the relative numbers of females are to be found.

If we combine the statistics for all of the 19

## Women in the academic search for excellence

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It would surprise no-one if we were to state that women are under-represented, especially at the senior academic levels, in all Australian universities. The important question to ask is whether their position is improving. This paper examines the extent to which the situation may have changed over the decade 1977-1987. To do so, it compares a study of 1977 by Gale<sup>1</sup> with statistics collected for 1987.

Ironically, one change which has occurred during this time has actually made the study more difficult. Whereas previously it was common for University calendars to show the forenames of female academic staff, this has now come to be seen as discriminatory, and all staff are now more commonly listed by surname and initials only. Thus, in 1977 the university calendars provided data on male and female staff and also gave other information such as qualifications which enabled various correlations to be made.

Because of the change in policy by several universities, it was not possible to obtain such information from the calendars in 1987.

However, by then the *Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986* had been passed by the Federal Government and all universities which had not already appointed equal opportunity officers were in effect compelled to do so. Furthermore, each institution was required by law to write a report for the Affirmative Action Agency, on progress towards equal opportunity for women.

Although these Affirmative Action reports contain less general information than the calendars on factors such as qualifications, by 1987 they were the only published source available to allow any comparison with the situation of a decade previously. However these reports are enormously variable in style and content and some had to be followed up with discussions with equal opportunity officers to clarify statistics. Even then, discrepancies, although relatively minor, can be found between these sources and other forms of university statistics. The information on the location of first and second degrees was again, as in 1977, taken from the calendars.

Because this paper sets out to compare the

situation over a ten-year span, it does not include the former institutes of technology or colleges of advanced education which are rapidly being renamed universities. In this paper, the term university applies only to those institutions formally defined as such prior to the changes in nomenclature which began in 1987. The year 1987 was a watershed therefore in several ways. It saw the beginnings of compulsory reporting on affirmative action and the end of the so-called binary divide which separated traditional universities from other institutions for higher education.

It was fortunate that the first study was done using 1977 data, thus making a ten-year analysis possible before the major changes and reorganisation of higher education came into being.

This paper does not attempt to analyse the reasons for any of the changes that have occurred, nor does it enter into the very extensive debate on affirmative action or amalgamations and re-classifications of institutions of higher education. The purpose of this paper is merely to present the statistics in a comparative form as a useful

**TABLE 3:**  
**Females as Percentage of Total Academic Staff**

University	1977 %	1987 %	Difference %
La Trobe	14.6	28.7	+ 14.1
James Cook	9.0	20.2	+ 11.2
New England	12.6	22.7	+ 10.1
Monash	10.9	19.8	+ 8.9
Tasmania	6.6	14.8	+ 8.2
ANU	10.7	18.3	+ 7.6
NSW	10.1	16.9	+ 6.8
Newcastle	9.4	14.0	+ 4.6
Sydney	15.8	19.8	+ 4.0
Adelaide	12.0	15.7	+ 3.7
Melbourne	16.6	19.7	+ 3.1
Macquarie	23.5	26.6	+ 3.1
Murdoch	15.6	18.1	+ 2.5
Griffith	20.4	22.9	+ 2.5
Flinders	11.2	12.0	+ 0.8

**TABLE 4:**  
**Females as Percentage of Total Number of Lecturers and Above**

University	1977 %	1987 %	Difference %
James Cook	6.3	15.1	+ 8.8
Macquarie	13.3	21.0	+ 7.7
ANU	8.4	15.9	+ 7.5
NSW	5.6	12.4	+ 6.8
Tasmania	5.0	10.9	+ 5.9
Monash	7.4	13.2	+ 5.8
Newcastle	6.7	12.5	+ 5.8
New England	7.5	12.6	+ 5.1
Sydney	10.5	15.5	+ 5.0
Murdoch	9.5	13.7	+ 4.2
La Trobe	13.4	17.3	+ 3.9
Adelaide	6.2	9.2	+ 3.0
Flinders	7.4	9.9	+ 2.5
Melbourne	12.7	14.7	+ 2.0
Griffith	15.8	15.8	0.0

**TABLE 5:**  
**Females as % of Total Number at Each Academic Level (15 Universities)**

University	1977		1987		Difference %
	No.	%	No.	%	
Prof./Assoc. Prof.	46	2.4	109	5.2	+ 2.8
Snr. Lect./Lecturer	529	11.1	903	17.8	+ 6.7
Snr. Tutor/Tutor	492	34.7	760	44.4	+ 9.7
	1067		1772		

universities we find that only 6.2% of females have reached the senior levels compared with 27.9% of males. By contrast, 42.9% of female academic staff are to be found at the junior levels in contrast with only 12.4% of the male academic staff. Such figures suggest that equity in promotion generally is still a long way off.

As interesting as the present variations might be, it is important to view them from some kind of historic perspective. The following table attempts to do just that.

Deakin University was omitted from the 1977 study because it had only recently

opened. For consistency, Deakin has also been omitted from the following comparisons. Queensland, Western Australia and Wollongong were also omitted from the 1977 study due to insufficient data and therefore it is not possible to compare their performances over the decade. For these reasons the following comparisons between 1977 and 1987 data refer to a total of fifteen universities and not the nineteen shown in the previous two tables. At the time of the original study the Australian National University was defined as two universities (School of General Studies and School of

Advanced Studies). They have since been amalgamated into one university.

The findings reveal an increase in the overall proportion of female academics employed in Australian universities. Overall there has been an improvement of some 6.6% from an average participation rate of 13.3% in 1977 to 19.9% in 1987. On that basis, one might be tempted to say that equal opportunity moves have reaped considerable gains over the decade. The changes, however, have been quite uneven as Table 3 demonstrates. In this table, institutions are ranked according to their percentage gain of female academics.

Of the 15 universities listed, La Trobe appears to be the best performer over the decade, almost doubling its proportion of female staff in that time but it should be noted that La Trobe started from a much lower baseline than either Macquarie or Griffith. Flinders stands out on this table as the one university which made virtually no gains in this time even though it had a lower base than La Trobe and therefore could have demonstrated quite high percentage gains.

However, as previous tables have shown, much of the female quota is made up of women at the tutoring and demonstrating grades. In order to evaluate a real commitment to equal opportunity, we need to consider the pattern of change for persons at the level of lecturer and above. By doing so we remove much of the confusion given by the inconsistent inclusion of part-time staff since they are to be found primarily at the tutoring grades. In Table 4 institutions are again listed by rank order of improvement. The first obvious factor is the contrast with Table 3.

The gains at this level have been nowhere near as significant as those suggested by Table 3 but considerable differences between institutions are still apparent.

Whilst James Cook heads the list, it started from a very small base of only nine female lecturers and above in 1977. Macquarie, on the other hand, has made a significant gain from a much larger baseline. Whilst Griffith appears at the bottom on this scale, it should be noted that Griffith was a relatively good performer in 1977 and thus gains were not as important as they should have been to other institutions. Both of the South Australian universities figure rather poorly in this scale and as Table 4 illustrates, neither can take consolation as can Griffith from their overall level in either 1977 or 1987. Yet New South Wales, which was also a relatively poor performer in 1977, has more than doubled its proportion of lecturing grade female staff over the decade. The proportion, however, is still relatively low.

The position is summarised in Table 5 which illustrates the overall gains during the decade across the 15 universities represented. 1987 is better than 1977 but the improvements in female participation at the senior levels must bring little joy to the hard-working equal opportunity officers who

strive so hard for so little. This rather suggests that traditional male procedures for appointment have been a little easier to dent at the more junior levels than in the senior positions and also that the traditional promotion criteria may still discriminate against women.

In the 1977 study, Gale suggested that one factor working against both the appointment and the promotion of women is the apparent preference which Australian universities give to people with overseas degrees. She observed that this preference disadvantaged women whose mobility generally was a great deal lower than that of men. Interrupted careers due both to motherhood responsibilities and the mobility of husbands made it much less likely that Australian women could go overseas to obtain degrees or that overseas women would come to Australia. Because the data are not available for 1987 as they were in 1977 to make possible a comparison of male and female nationality, degree locations and mobility, we can present only general statistics. These figures were calculated from the calendars for each university. Whilst we cannot distinguish between males and females, we can determine the extent to which overseas qualifications still figure highly in Australian appointment and promotion decisions. The following two tables include all of the universities covered in 1977 since at that time degree location was available for Queensland, Western Australia and Wollongong even when gender differentiation was not possible.

The 1977 study made the assumption, for discussion purposes, that the location of the first degree could be used as a guide to nationality. Thus, if academic staff gained their first degree in Australia, it was assumed that they were Australian nationals in a general sense.

In Table 6 universities are ranked according to the proportion of their academic staff in 1987 who could be defined as Australian by the origin of their first degree. It is apparent from this table that universities still have a very high regard for non-Australians when appointing lecturing staff. In fact, there has been no change over the decade in the relative proportion of academic staff who gained their first degrees in Australia as opposed to those who came from overseas. The universities which made the greatest gains in recognising Australian graduates were Griffith and James Cook, but these two figured well at the bottom of the list of Australian appointees in 1977. On the other hand, the universities which were at the top of the list of Australian staff in 1977, namely Melbourne and Wollongong, have actually shown an increasing preference for non-Australians over the decade. If we are all in search of excellence, how is it possible that such different results are achieved from one university to another and in the one university from one time to another? Such temporal

**TABLE 6:**  
**Australian First Degree Holders as Percentage of Total Number of First Degree Holders Lecturer and Above**

University	1977	1987	Difference
Newcastle	68.1	69.8	+ 1.7
New South Wales	69.3	68.1	- 1.3
Macquarie	67.4	67.5	+ 0.1
Sydney	68.2	63.9	- 4.3
Flinders	53.9	63.4	+ 9.5
Monash	61.2	63.3	+ 2.1
Wollongong	71.5	62.4	- 9.1
James Cook	50.3	61.8	+ 11.5
La Trobe	61.0	61.1	+ 0.1
Tasmania	56.2	60.4	+ 4.2
New England	57.1	59.7	+ 2.6
Western Australia	54.8	58.9	+ 4.1
Griffith	46.1	58.0	+ 11.9
Melbourne	69.3	56.2	- 13.1
Murdoch	55.4	54.8	- 0.6
ANU	51.7	54.1	+ 2.5
Queensland	60.6	54.0	- 6.6
Adelaide	56.4	50.6	- 5.8

**TABLE 7:**  
**Percentage of Lecturers and Above who Hold a Higher Degree from an Australian University**

University	1977	1987 (ranked)
Newcastle	53.8	62.8
NSW	50.5	60.4
Melbourne	52.6	56.6
Macquarie	41.6	53.5
Queensland	42.3	53.5
Flinders	34.0	51.7
Western Australia	34.4	50.2
Monash	40.4	49.8
James Cook	39.2	49.6
Sydney	49.4	49.5
Wollongong	51.2	49.2
New England	44.2	48.6
Tasmania	38.8	47.1
Griffith	28.9	47.0
Adelaide	39.5	46.6
Murdoch	40.5	44.7
ANU	38.0	42.5
La Trobe	37.1	38.2

and spatial variations, cast considerable doubt on the objectivity of our appointment procedures.

The 1977 study also illustrates the fact that it was the location where the second or higher degree was obtained that greatly influenced the appointment and promotion process. Thus, women who were unable to obtain a higher degree outside Australia, preferably in the United Kingdom, were disadvantaged.

Table 7 illustrates the importance of an overseas higher degree for appointment to an Australian university. Universities are ranked according to the proportion of their staff who hold higher degrees from an Australian university. While there has been virtually no change overall in the appointment of Australians to academic posts at the level of lec-

turer and above as Table 6 demonstrates, Australian higher degrees do appear to be gaining greater recognition. With the exception of Wollongong and marginally Sydney, universities on the whole have increased the proportion of lecturing staff possessing higher degrees gained in Australia. Whereas in 1977 only three universities could boast of even half of their staff possessing an Australian higher degree by 1987 some seven universities passed the 50% mark. It should be noted, however, that the figures in Table 7 are based solely on a comparison of higher degrees awarded in Australia as opposed to overseas, thus staff who do not possess any higher degree are excluded. Generally now, however, such people are few in number.

Again, enormous differences are obvious. How can La Trobe with only 38.2% of its

staff with higher degrees obtained in Australia demonstrate that its appointment procedures search for the same qualities of excellence as do those of Newcastle with 62.8% of staff with Australian higher degrees?

While the substantial differences are self-evident the reasons are much more elusive. Unfortunately, correlations on the basis of gender are not possible.

What do these statistics tell us about Australian universities in general? Overall, the

relative position of women has improved but not substantially during the decade under review. The explanation of why some universities have improved their overall representation of women whereas others have made fewer gains requires much more detailed study. The recognition of Australian degrees has also not advanced greatly in that period of time.

#### References

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#### Acknowledgements

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## Women in higher education – Changes in the '80s?

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During the past 20 years there has been a growing emphasis on the advancement of women in higher education, more especially in the last decade since the advent of policies of equal opportunity. Reviewing the years 1960 to 1985 the position of women in higher education has improved in both Australia and the UK. By 1985 female participation rates at bachelor level in Australia were nearly equal with those of men while in the UK they had improved to 42%. But such improvements have chiefly taken place at lower levels rather than at the honours and the postgraduate levels and they cluster in a narrow range of fields, chiefly in the humanities and law with some growth in medicine. Changes in fields like engineering have been minimal.

This paper argues that the key to improving the position of women in academe is improvement at honours and postgraduate levels. Our examination of trends in these areas since 1980 finds that gains have been minimal and that the possibilities for further improvements in women's position are limited.

This paper focuses on continuing inequities of gender in academic staffing and postgraduate study in both countries. In Australia by 1984, 27% of higher degrees conferred went to females compared with 24% in 1980. For the UK the figures were 30% and 26%.<sup>1</sup> Thus small improvements have occurred, but they seem unlikely to increase, or even continue. An analysis of the Australian figures shows that improvement is slowing.<sup>2</sup>

Between 1980 and 1984 the percentage of females receiving Masters degrees has improved but there has been an uneven upward trend at PhD level and a small gain for Doctorates other than PhDs although only 6% of these degrees go to women. The improving trends in all three categories seems to be slowing. Inequities are being slowly reduced but the gap between male and female achievements remains very large. Factors which affect the rate of graduation are: the

#### Australia: Higher Degrees Completing Students, 1980, 1983 and 1984.

	Year	Males		Females		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Doctorate other than PhD	1980	44	95.7	2	4.3	46	100
	1983	45	93.7	3	6.3	48	100
	1984	47	94.0	3	6.0	60	100
PhD	1980	678	80.6	163	19.4	841	100
	1983	704	77.7	202	22.3	906	100
	1984	761	79.6	195	20.4	956	100
Masters	1980	1556	74.3	538	25.7	2094	100
	1983	1830	70.8	754	29.2	2584	100
	1984	1997	70.2	846	29.8	2843	100

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Tertiary Education Australia, from Table 2.17, 1984, P.31.

#### Female Percentage of Postgraduate and Undergraduate Enrolments, 1982-1985 (Fulltime), UK and Australia

Year	United Kingdom		Australia	
	% Postgraduate	% Undergraduate	% Postgraduate	% Undergraduate
1982/83	40.2	41.4	33.3	47.6
1983/84	39.8	41.4	33.6	47.8
1984/85	40.3	42.2	31.8	48.1

Source: University Statistics, 1984-5, University Grants Commission, 1986  
Australian Bureau of Statistics, 1985

successful transition from honours to higher degree (i.e. are those qualified to pursue postgraduate studies actually doing so?); whether the enrolment is full or part-time; the level of enrolment (Masters or PhD?) and the field of enrolment. In each of these four areas gender is a factor influencing decisions. Men are more likely to complete an honours degree and to enrol in full-time postgraduate degrees (in fields other than humanities). Women are less likely to complete honours, less likely to enrol for postgraduate degrees at all, more likely to enrol part-time, less likely to enrol for PhDs and more likely to cluster in the humanities.

Is the transition from honours a barrier to increased female enrolments at the postgraduate level? In the UK the proportion of

female undergraduates and postgraduates is very close whereas in Australia they diverge significantly. In the 1980s increased female participation at undergraduate level has not been fully reflected at postgraduate level.

Two major considerations for students undertaking postgraduate study are finance and entry qualifications. Although the two are not unrelated, we need to consider the question of entrance qualifications separately. Are suitably qualified women simply not proceeding with postgraduate study? Or are there insufficient numbers of suitably qualified women (that is, women with firsts or upper seconds)? At the national level these questions cannot be easily answered — what little research exists in the area concentrates on particular institutions because, as Buck-

ridge and Barham found, statistics 'are not easily available in a form in which comparability can be assessed.'<sup>3</sup>

These reservations aside, it seems that the pool from which suitably qualified women can be drawn is considerably smaller than that for males because fewer women than men proceed to the honours year.<sup>4</sup> Figures for the U.K. in 1983/4 show a similar trend:

#### Total Graduates (1983-4), Males and Females, UK by Level of Bachelor Degree

	% of Graduates at each level by gender		
	N	Men %	Women %
1st class hon:	3335	72.35	27.65
2nd class hon:	28479	56.00	44.00
Other	11586	66.00	34.00
Total:	43400	59.50	40.50

Source: Vol. 2 First Destinations of University Graduates, Table One, pp.12, 13, University Statistics, Students and Staff, published by the Universities' Statistical Record on behalf of the University Grants Committee, March, 1986.

Using the above figures it is interesting to note that of all women completing bachelors degrees 4.3% gained first class honours; 75.5% gained second class honours while 20.2% took out other bachelor degrees. Of all male graduates, 7.7% took out first class honours; 65.5% took out seconds while 26.7% gained other bachelor degrees. In 1984/5 13,193 men (or 59.7% of the total) entered full-time postgraduate study while 8,910 women (or 40.3% of the total) entered full-time postgraduate study. These percentages roughly correspond to the percentages of men and women receiving bachelor degrees. While it cannot be asserted that the 1984/5 postgraduate cohort corresponds exactly to the 1983/4 final year bachelors degree cohort, the male postgraduate enrolments for 1984/5 are about 30% of the total number of males graduating with bachelors degrees in 1983/4. The female postgraduate enrolments for 1984/5 are about 30% of the total number of females graduating with bachelors degrees in 1983/4.

If we look at the number of men and women receiving firsts in 1983/4 and compare these figures with the numbers of men and women entering postgraduate study in 1984/5 a slightly different picture emerges. There were 13,193 men entering postgraduate study in 1984/5 and 3335 men received firsts in 1983/4. This proportion is 25%. There were 8910 women entering postgraduate study in 1984/5. In 1983/4 1274 women received a first class bachelor degree. Potentially the proportion of women entering postgraduate study with firsts is only 14%. The fact that in general women taking on higher degrees have lower entry qualifications than the males may well be a factor in explaining why fewer women enrol for a higher degree. Given the extreme competition for postgraduate awards to finance further study, women are less likely

to win such awards.

Aggregated statistics relating to honours are not available in Australia so the relationship between honours and postgraduate entry is less clear-cut. What is clear is that fewer women in Australia enrol for higher degrees than women in the UK. Whether this results from their poorer performance or lesser participation in honours is difficult to ascer-

tain since honours statistics must be obtained from individual universities. Buckridge and Barham found that for Griffith University 'the proportion of women proceeding to honours was only about half the proportion of men.'<sup>5</sup> In Australia an honours degree is four years whereas in the UK a student may graduate with honours after three years of study. For women the extra year may be a significant barrier to taking out an honours degree. This may go some way to account for the seemingly better performance of British women at honours level which in turn may contribute to their superior participation rates at higher degree level.

Another explanation for gender inequities at postgraduate level may be the continuing imbalance in male and female enrolments in certain fields of study. This imbalance has its origins at the undergraduate level:

#### Full time and Part-time Undergraduates and Postgraduates 1984-5, Males and Females, UK and Australia

Field of Study	Country	Males		Females		Total	
		N	%	N	%	N	%
Education	UK	1244	31.7	2814	69.3	4058	100
	Australia	5083	40.6	7427	59.45	12510	100
Engineering/Technology	UK	32936	90.1	3636	9.9	36572	100
	Australia	13330	92.5	1076	7.5	14406	100
Medicine/Dentistry/Health	UK	15549	52.5	14069	47.5	29618	100
	Australia	7696	59.1	53325	40.9	61021	100
Language/Literature/Area Studies	UK	9741	30.3	22432	69.7	32173	100
	Australia	16548	36.2	29170	63.8	45718	100

Source: University Statistics, Tertiary Education Australia, from Table 2.11, 1984, P.23, University Grants Committee, UK, March, 1986

In the UK women are still moving into education in large numbers, more so than in Australia. There is still a concentration of women in humanities in both countries. In the medical field, women have certainly increased their participation rate in Britain.

When it comes to other traditionally male dominated areas, however, women are still lagging behind men. Nevertheless women in the UK are doing slightly better than their Australian counterparts in engineering and technology. In Australia in 1980, female enrolments in engineering made up 4.7% of the total although there has been a steady increase since then. Imbalances in field of study affects women's chances of receiving postgraduate awards since 50% of these are awarded in the traditionally male dominated areas of the natural and applied sciences.<sup>6</sup>

Although Australian women have increased their participation rate in postgraduate studies since 1970 much of the increase, especially in the 1980s, is in part-time enrolment. In 1978 only 27% of female postgraduate enrolments were part-time; in 1983 the figure had increased substantially to 38%. This trend can only slow down improvements in the female share of higher degrees conferred.

Women in Australia and to a lesser extent in the UK are opting to take higher degrees part-time which prolongs enrolment and reduces their chances of obtaining financial support. Unless more realistic attempts are made to fund women their participation in higher education may not improve. This seems unlikely given that governments would like universities to become more 'relevant' and 'market oriented' which means increased funding for male dominated subject areas.<sup>7</sup>

Have the slight gains at postgraduate level been reflected in academic staffing levels in UK and Australian universities?

In 1980 women were 13.6% of academic staff. This had moved to 15.6% in 1985. Overall in Britain the position of women has not changed dramatically. More men than women became lecturers (30% of men in 1978/9; 11% of women).<sup>8</sup>

More men than women entering university teaching had a PhD (75% of men; 60% of women).<sup>9</sup> Women lecturers and assistant lecturers in the UK still cluster in arts, social, administrative and business studies. About half of female lecturers and assistant lec-