

A Discipline in Crisis?:

**University History Staffing in Australia and New Zealand,
2022**

Report to the Australian Historical Association Executive

Martin Crotty (The University of Queensland)

Paul Sendziuk (The University of Adelaide)

Emily Winter (The University of Queensland)

October 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Summary

Executive Summary	1
-------------------	---

Introduction

Background	3
Method and Response Rate	7
Acknowledgments	8

Staffing

Staffing Numbers and Appointment Types	9
Staffing Seniority	13
Gender and Appointment Types	18
Gender and Seniority	25
Indigenous and Māori Staff	32
Casual Staff	34
Honorary Staffing	37

Student Mix and Staff-Student Ratios

Student Load	43
--------------	----

Conclusion

Conclusion	48
------------	----

Appendices

The Survey Form	49
Participating Institutions	51

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report relates the findings of a survey that was undertaken at the end of 2022 concerning the staffing profile of History departments/groupings at Australian and New Zealand universities. It also compares these findings to the results of a very similar survey undertaken six years earlier.

The 2022 survey captured the effects on the discipline of three contributing phenomena. First, the structured disadvantage that History operates under in the post-Dawkins university; second, the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic; and third, the impact of the Commonwealth Government's Job-Ready Graduates Package, which more than doubled the cost of the average Arts degree, thus steering potential students away from the Humanities.

In brief, these are the most pertinent findings:

History Staffing and Seniority

In 2022, a total of 378.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) historians were employed in History groupings in Australia and New Zealand on continuing appointments, fixed-term appointments of one year or longer, or postdoctoral and other fellowships. This represents a considerable decline of 30.7 FTE positions (7.5 percent) since 2016. The decline was more pronounced in Australia than New Zealand.

For continuing positions across all History groupings in Australia and New Zealand, there was a higher proportion of staff holding appointments at professor or associate professor level (54.6 percent), than at the combined three levels below (45.4 percent). In the 2016 survey, the proportion was split evenly at 50 percent each. The staffing profile of New Zealand History groupings was significantly more senior than that of Australian ones, with 65.9 percent of New Zealand continuing historians being professors or associate professors, compared to 52.4 percent in the Australian context.

Gender and Appointment Types

Across all employment categories combined (continuing, fixed-term and postdoctoral and other fellowships), women outnumbered male historians in History discipline formations in Australia and New Zealand in 2022. This is true of both countries individually as well. Women have typically suffered from less security of employment and from being concentrated in the lower ranks of the profession. Across Australia and New Zealand (combined) in 2022, however, there was parity between men and women in terms of continuing positions. Women were over-represented in fixed-term appointments (71.3 percent) and postdoctoral and other fellowships (74.9 percent). This represents a dramatic transformation from as late as the mid-1990s when male staff outnumbered women by a factor of approximately 3.5 to one.

Gender and Seniority

In 2022, women held 50 percent of professor and associate professor History positions (combined) in Australia and New Zealand, with a higher proportion of these being associate professors (54.9 percent). Women were under-represented at professor level in Australia (due to their fewer numbers in the non-Go8 sector) but outnumber men at this level in New

Zealand. In Australia, men were more likely to hold the lower-level positions (with a combined difference of 5.3 FTE positions at lecturer and senior lecturer level), whereas it was women who were slightly more likely to hold these positions in New Zealand. The situation of women in regards to seniority in the profession has improved in both countries since 2016.

Indigenous and Māori Staff

In 2022, in New Zealand, 10 percent of all paid History staff were Indigenous or Māori. The figure was lower for Australia (4.4 percent), reflective of the smaller percentage of the Australian population identifying as Indigenous/First Nations. Hence, as a discipline, History appears to be tracking ahead of aspirational targets set by universities in terms of the employment of Indigenous and Māori staff.

Casual Staff

In 2022, the *estimated* proportion of History teaching performed by casual staff at Australian universities ranged from zero to 80 percent. The average estimated proportion of teaching performed by casuals at Go8 universities was 37.9 percent; the corresponding figure for non-Go8 universities was 29.4 percent. New Zealand History groupings were less reliant on casual labour than their Australian counterparts; here it was estimated that they performed 8 percent of History teaching.

Student Mix and Staff-Student Ratios

Since 2016, there has been a dramatic decline in student load (EFTSL): 22.9 percent reduction in Australia and 10.1 percent reduction in New Zealand. The decline in EFTSL was noticeable across all student categories: undergraduate, honours, postgraduate coursework, and higher degree by research (HDR), but was most evident in the postgraduate categories.

The staff-student ratio for Australia and New Zealand combined in 2022 was 1:17.9 EFTSL (a considerable reduction from the 2016 ratio of 1:20.7 EFTSL). There was a difference across national boundaries, with the staff-student ratio in New Zealand at 1:20.1 EFTSL, being less favourable than that in Australia, at 1:17.5 EFTSL. The New Zealand staff-student ratio has not changed since 2016, whereas the Australian figure declined from 1:20.8 to 1:17.5.

In summary...

While gains have been made in terms of the employment of women (overall, and at higher levels) and Indigenous/Māori staff, the data pertaining to overall staff numbers and the considerable decline in student load points to a discipline in considerable distress.

INTRODUCTION

Background

In 2018 when we last reported on staffing numbers and composition in Australian and New Zealand History disciplines, we noted that we were reporting in an environment of long-running anxiety about the fortunes of the discipline. Occasional bursts of optimism at moments when, for example, the History profession was supplemented by an infusion of staff and students from Colleges of Advanced Education and other institutions in the mergers that followed the Dawkins reforms, or when History became especially topical in the daily news cycle, had been outweighed by much more on the negative side of the ledger.¹ Political hostility from conservative governments and media commentators, the increasing reliance on overseas students to fund university operations, the structure and nature of the corporatised post-Dawkins university, and an increased emphasis on vocationalism in education have combined to create an unfavourable backdrop.

Such fears and anxieties about the fortunes of the discipline have been far from groundless. Despite the vast growth in Australian universities over the last fifty years, and notwithstanding outstanding and innovative work from its practitioners, History has not blossomed. Rather, staffing numbers have withered. While earlier counts of staff did not make clear their methodology, it is clear that there has been a long and gradual decline, especially when considered relative to the overall staffing complement of Australian universities and relative to the number of students. There were approximately 400 historians employed in Australian universities in the early 1970s, and the number probably peaked at about 450 following the Dawkins-inspired mergers of the mid-to-late 1980s, when university History departments received (not always in enthusiastic fashion) an infusion of staff from recently restructured or merged tertiary institutions such as Colleges of Advanced Education. Since then, numbers declined to about 400 in the mid 1990s, then perhaps 300-350 at the turn of the century.² As discussed in some detail in our 2018 report, the numbers are, however, somewhat rubbery due to different and somewhat unclear counting methodologies. Head counts are different from equivalent full-time staffing counts, and it is not clear how past surveys counted staff outside History groupings (in departments of Economic History, Indigenous Studies units, or Australian Studies centres, for example).

¹ On the Dawkins reforms, see Stuart Macintyre, André Brett and Gwilym Croucher, *No End of a Lesson? Australia's Unified National System of Higher Education*, Melbourne University Press, Melbourne, 2017.

² Gordon Greenwood, "The Present State of History Teaching and Research in Australian Universities: An Estimate", *Historical Studies*, vol. 6, no. 23, 1954, pp. 324-6. See Martin Crotty, "The Slow Death of Academic History? History in the Academy Since Dawkins", in Paul Ashton and Paula Hamilton (eds), *The Australian History Industry*, Australian Scholarly Publishing, Melbourne, 2022, pp. 19-33. For a fuller discussion of past surveys and estimates of staffing numbers, see Martin Crotty and Paul Sendziuk, "The State of the Discipline: University History in Australia and New Zealand", Report to the Australian Historical Association Executive, March 2018, available at https://www.theaha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/The-State-of-the-Discipline_University-History-in-Australia-and-NZ-2018.pdf, and Martin Crotty and Paul Sendziuk, "The Numbers Game: History Staffing in Australian and New Zealand Universities", *Australian Historical Studies*, vol.50, no. 3, 2019, pp. 354-77.

In 2016 we undertook a comprehensive survey of all History Departments (or, more accurately, 'groupings') in Australian and New Zealand universities, examining their staff profile in detail, and also looked closely at their curricula. We used a survey instrument designed in consultation with the Australian Historical Association Executive and the Heads of History in an attempt to provide a more nuanced analysis of History staffing than had been undertaken previously. We looked in particular at questions of gender representation, seniority and types of appointment. We reported these findings through a report to the Australian Historical Association and the Heads of History, orally at the Australian Historical Association conference in Newcastle in 2017, and in three publications.³ We found that the number of historians employed in Australian History discipline groupings was relatively stable at 346.6 full-time equivalent staff (FTE), including 295.2 FTE continuing staff. Comparative numbers for New Zealand were 62.7 and 52.7. Other key findings were that there was almost exact gender parity in the total number of appointments in Australia, and only a slight preponderance of men in New Zealand (52 percent). There were, however, remaining imbalances in continuing positions (52 percent male in Australia, 57 percent in New Zealand) and at the more senior levels of the profession (57 percent male at Professor and Associate Professor level). The data confirmed wider employment patterns of women being concentrated at the more junior levels and being in less secure employment, although our report noted that the gender imbalances had dramatically improved in the previous twenty years. In the 1990s women were considerably outnumbered in the academic historical profession and were in a marked minority at its senior levels.

It was always intended that the survey would be repeated at some stage in the following 5-10 years to examine subsequent developments, particularly overall numbers and the gender balance. The urgency of repeating the survey was increased by two unforeseen developments. The first was the COVID pandemic which, particularly in Australia given the lack of government financial support with universities being denied access to the JobKeeper scheme (albeit receiving a \$1 billion injection of research funds in the October 2020 federal budget to partly compensate for the loss of overseas student income), prompted Australian universities into often dramatic cost-cutting as they suffered sharp revenue declines from a number of sources, but particularly the loss of overseas students. Then in June 2020 came the announcement of the federal government's Job-ready Graduates Package, which came as a nasty shock for Humanities scholars, and which was widely condemned.⁴

Through the Job-ready Graduates Package, and amidst the turmoil of the first year of the pandemic, the Coalition government under Scott Morrison inflicted further damage upon the Humanities. In what was described as "potentially the greatest hit to Australia's humanities

³ Crotty and Sendziuk, "The State of the Discipline"; Crotty and Sendziuk, "The Numbers Game"; Paul Sendziuk and Martin Crotty, "'Fragmented, parochial, and specialized'?: The History Curriculum in Australian and New Zealand Universities", *History Australia*, vol. 16, no. 2, 2019, pp. 239-65; Paul Sendziuk and Martin Crotty, "The History Curriculum in New Zealand Universities", *New Zealand Journal of History*, vol. 54, no. 1, 2020, pp. 69-93.

⁴ For a particularly eloquent reaction to the package, see Frank Bongiorno "Oh, the humanities", *The Monthly*, 22 June 2020, <https://www.themonthly.com.au/blog/frank-bongiorno/2020/22/2020/1592791777/oh-humanities>, accessed 21 May 2023; Conor Duffy, "Australia's universities just got another \$1b to spend on research, but will it be enough?", *ABC News*, 7 October 2020, [https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-10-07/universities-promised-\\$1billion-research-funding-federal-budget/12732088](https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-10-07/universities-promised-$1billion-research-funding-federal-budget/12732088) accessed 13 October 2023.

sector in a century” by Professor Joy Damousi, President of the Australian Academy for the Humanities and the Australian Historical Association, Education Minister Dan Tehan imposed a restructuring of university student fees that markedly increased the price of Arts and Humanities degrees.⁵ The restructuring was supposed to benefit the Australian economy by incentivising students to study STEM subjects such as Engineering and Science, as well as Education, whilst deterring them from study in the Arts and Humanities. Prospective Arts students, Tehan quipped, would have to do some “thinking about the employment outcomes that they are going to get from their degree”, despite evidence of the usefulness of Arts and Humanities skills and the employability of such graduates.⁶ Furthermore, a study conducted in 2021 by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency reveals that the earnings of those with undergraduate Humanities degrees are comparable to positions in the science and maths sector.⁷ The study also detailed the continuing gender disparity amongst the university student population. In the Humanities and Arts sectors, female students are predominant, whilst in STEM fields male students make up the majority.⁸ Therefore, it is women, along with students from rural or low-socioeconomic backgrounds, for whom the Arts and Humanities often represent more accessible study pathways, who are most affected.⁹ Critics highlight that all this would have been known to Scott Morrison and Dan Tehan, and argue that their fee restructuring was a politically motivated attack upon Humanities subjects and practitioners, a financial strike to give Coalition politicians’ long rhetorical war on History and other Humanities subjects practical effect.¹⁰

Whilst our study cannot offer long-term projections regarding how student enrolments History will be affected, the fee changes will clearly not be positive. It was galling for historians to face in 2020; they and their organisational units were already buckling under COVID-induced financial strain and coming to grips with teaching classes via Zoom. Facing a government that doled out money to the Australian War Memorial but starved other cultural institutions, which supported foreign-owned private tertiary operations in Australia through JobKeeper but not its Australian public universities, and which instituted fee changes with the intent of steering students away from the Humanities, historians in Australian universities were entitled to a degree of despair.

⁵ Australian Academy for the Humanities, “Humanities hit hardest when needed more than ever”, June 2020, <https://humanities.org.au/power-of-the-humanities/humanities-hit-hardest-when-needed-more-than-ever>, accessed 9 August 2023.

⁶ Nassim Khadem, “Government’s university fee changes mean humanities students will pay the entire cost of their degrees”, *ABC News*, 20 June 2020, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-06-20/study-arts-and-humanities-government-fees-tertiary-education/12374124>, accessed 9 August 2023.

⁷ Workplace Gender Equality Agency, “Higher education enrolments and graduate labour market statistics”, Australian Government, 28 April 2021, <https://www.wgea.gov.au/resources/publications/higher-education-enrolments-and-graduate-labour-market-statistics>, accessed 9 August 2023.

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ “Can the Humanities and Social Sciences Survive COVID?”, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dh-MSZRhi6I&ab_channel=TheFacultyofArtsandSocialSciences%2CTheUniversityofSydney, accessed 9 August 2023.

¹⁰ See, for example, Bongiorno “Oh, the humanities”; Crotty, “The Slow Death of Academic History?”.

Universities weathered the COVID storm and in 2021 most returned to financial surpluses – if they even went into deficit – but university budgets continued to face the strains of reduced overseas enrolments through 2021 and 2022 in particular, then cost pressures from inflation and in at least some instances lower than usual student demand into 2023 as the labour market remained strong. Universities have cut costs in multiple ways, but for those working in History the main concern was the reduction in staffing. Casual staff were dispensed with in droves in 2020 as universities sought immediate and “easy” cost reductions, and there has been widespread anecdotal evidence of departing continuing staff not being replaced.

This survey, then, measures the effects of three contributing phenomena. The first is the structured disadvantage which History operates under in the post-Dawkins university, where priority is given to activities that generate the maximum revenue for the corporatised institution. Combined with an increased emphasis on vocationalism and the political hostility of successive Coalition governments, the operating environment for History post-1988 has been generally unfavourable, resulting in a slow withering in staff numbers over decades. The second is the effect of the pandemic, where the financial strain imposed upon universities by reduced overseas student numbers in particular has resulted in staffing reductions, and the third is the 2020 fee reforms that sought to steer students away from the Humanities.

We have, however, also hoped to capture more positive trends. Our 2016 survey showed that History staffing in Australia and New Zealand was on the cusp of achieving gender parity in overall numbers, a remarkable achievement given that most other disciplines in the Humanities evidenced a significant gender imbalance. We noted that the gender balance was much more even in Australia and New Zealand than it was in the United Kingdom, and we predicted that by the time we undertook the next iteration of the survey, History would have achieved gender balance in overall numbers and would have closed the remaining gap at the levels of Professor and Associate Professor. We also hoped to capture at least some of the emerging diversity of the History discipline. New Zealand History units have for decades employed Māori historians, but Australian universities have been rather slower to employ First Nations historians. First Nations academics have often been employed in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Units, but in this survey, we have captured a number of individuals employed in History units as universities have sought to at least partly Indigenise their operations.

Our survey of staff numbers builds on previous surveys undertaken by individuals and by the Australian Historical Association and the Heads of History. A full overview of these counts (and their limitations) can be found in our 2016 survey report, and a briefer overview also appeared in our article in *Australian Historical Studies*.¹¹ We do not propose to repeat it here, but a brief summation provides context for the data in this report. Stuart Macintyre’s 1996 review of the discipline of History for the then Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs estimated that there were about 60 historians employed in seven departments in 1954, and 150 in ten departments in 1964.¹² In 1973 Geoffrey Serle

¹¹ Crotty and Sendziuk, “The State of the Discipline”; Crotty and Sendziuk, “The Numbers Game”.

¹² Stuart Macintyre, “Discipline Review: History”, *Australian Historical Association Bulletin*, no. 83, December 1996, p. 3.

estimated that there were 320 historians in History departments plus perhaps 200-250 in other tertiary institutions such as Colleges of Advanced Education.¹³ Following the late 1980s Dawkins mergers which saw the History staff of Colleges of Advanced Education and Institute of Technology merged into the university sector, the Heads of History reported 451 academic historians in 1989.¹⁴ History staff then declined relatively rapidly to between 300 and 350 in the late 1990s and early 2000s.¹⁵ Our 2016 survey revealed 295 FTE continuing historians in Australian universities in 2016, plus another 51 FTE on paid fellowships or on fix-term appointments of longer than 1 year.¹⁶

Prior to our 2016 survey, we could not find previous counts of the number of historians in New Zealand universities. In 2016 we counted 52 FTE historians on continuing appointments in New Zealand History groupings, and another 6.5 FTE on paid fellowships of fix-term appointments of longer than 1 year.¹⁷

As noted above, and in our previous report, historical numbers are somewhat rubbery partly because it is not clear whether previous surveys counted historians in formations outside core History groupings (such as research centres or cognate disciplines such as Economic History) and because previous counts included full-time or part-time tutors who undertook tasks that are now primarily undertaken by casual staff. It was for this reason that we were extremely clear in the 2016 version of this survey as to our methodology and how we assembled and disassembled the data.

Method and Response Rate

The current survey was designed by the authors in consultation with members of the AHA Executive. It was modelled on the 2016 survey's questions regarding staffing but had some slight adjustments. We expanded the gender options to recognise non-binary identities, included a question regarding the percentage of staff identifying as Indigenous or Māori, and asked Heads to estimate the percentage of teaching that was undertaken by casual staff as well as the number of courses coordinated by casual staff. The survey and a covering letter outlining the purpose of the research were sent by the AHA Executive Officer to the 45 Heads of History at Australian and New Zealand universities.¹⁸ Of these, 39 were located in Australia and six in New Zealand. Heads were asked to provide data for their specific History grouping rather than attempting to estimate the number of historians working in other disciplinary, cross-, trans-, or multi-disciplinary formations. Most Heads had little trouble

¹³ Geoffrey Serle, "The State of the Profession in Australia", *Historical Studies*, vol. 13, no. 61, 1973, p. 687.

¹⁴ Stuart Macintyre, "'Funny You Should Ask That': Higher Education as a Market", *Evatt Journal*, vol. 2, no. 3, April 2002. Available at <http://evatt.org.au/papers/funny-you-should-ask.html>.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*; Jill Roe, "History at the Crossroads", *Australian Historical Association Bulletin*, no. 95, summer 2002/3, p. 10.

¹⁶ Crotty and Sendziuk, "The State of the Discipline", p. 7; Crotty and Sendziuk, "The Numbers Game", p. 359.

¹⁷ Crotty and Sendziuk, "The State of the Discipline", p. 7.

¹⁸ Note that the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) in Canberra was surveyed separately from the main History program at The University of New South Wales. No History groupings were found at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, Bond University, Torrens University, Central Queensland University, The University of Divinity, The University of Canberra, Edith Cowan University, Charles Darwin University or the University of South Australia.

completing the form with the assistance of professional staff who could supply verified data. A copy of the survey form appears as Appendix B of this report.

However, a number of History groupings were unable to provide data as easily as they had in the past, or were only able to provide partial data. This is, it would appear, a function of the increasing disconnect between academic staff and professional staff managing matters such as enrolments and controlling data. One group of historians told us that they “would very much like the information you are seeking for our own purposes”. At another institution the Faculty flatly refused to provide the data we were seeking to the discipline head, while in other cases discipline heads had to make repeated requests, or calculate EFTSL data from head counts of enrolled students. Data gathering thus proved considerably more onerous for the report’s authors and for some Heads of History in 2022 than it had in 2016 when we last conducted the survey. In a few cases, the disciplinary groupings in the smaller universities appear to have disappeared, so some institutions that contributed to the 2016 survey are not in this iteration as they no longer teach History, or no longer have a staff and student quotient of sufficient size to be visible to external parties. History and historians in such situations have been lost altogether or are now an almost invisible part of broader generalist degrees and organisational structures.

Of the 39 Australian and six New Zealand History groupings that were on our original list, we received responses from 34 Australian and five New Zealand groupings. Responses were checked for internal and external consistency and improbable or incomplete answers. Where necessary, confirmation and/or clarification of responses was sought from the relevant Head before the data was entered into spreadsheets. Where we received incomplete responses or did not receive any data, we used University webpages and other resources to estimate as best we could. Our results therefore represent a near-complete dataset for Australia, but we have not achieved the almost total coverage that we managed in 2016. We are, however, confident that the data sets we are working with are near complete and provide an accurate image of History staffing in Australia and New Zealand and the changes since 2016.

It should be noted that as this report was being finalised, the Australian Catholic University announced staff cuts which will include 8-10 historians.¹⁹ These cuts are not included in the data for this report, which is based on 2022 numbers, but they represent a significant further blow to the discipline in Australia; approximately a three percent cut in History staffing numbers through one round of staff cuts at a single institution.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the support provided by the AHA President, Professor Frank Bongiorno, and all Heads of History who provided us with the data as best they could. We also acknowledge the support provided by the School of Historical and Philosophical Inquiry and the UQ Student Enrichment and Employability Development team who co-funded a summer scholarship for Emily Winter to assist with the collection and analysis of the data. We (Paul and Martin) were so impressed with Emily’s work that we invited her to remain involved in the project and recognised her as a co-author rather than a research assistant.

¹⁹ Caitlin Cassidy, “Australian Catholic University Sparks Anger Over Scrapping Medieval History and Philosophy Departments”, *Guardian*, 14 September 2023.

STAFFING

Staffing Numbers and Appointment Types

The following data provides total staffing numbers, employment location and type of appointment for historians employed in Australia and New Zealand in 2022. The data reveals the levels and patterns of staffing across the two countries combined and in the two countries separately. It also reveals the differences between the 'Group of Eight' (Go8) universities and non-Go8 sectors in Australia.

Methodological note: except where noted in this report, we have calculated "total staff" as being all academic staff, including fellowship holders and those on fixed-term appointments of one year or more in duration. We have excluded professional staff, honorary staff, casual staff, and those on appointments of one year or less. We discuss the situation concerning casual staff and honorary staff – of whom there are many, performing valuable service in higher education – in subsequent sections of this report. In calculating the numbers of continuing staff, we have included those who hold fellowships but who will return to continuing positions once those fellowships are completed. These fellowships are treated as "temporary variations" of a continuing appointment. In calculating the numbers of postdoctoral and fellowship holders we have included only those who do not have continuing positions to return to. To do otherwise would result in double counting.

Results

	Australia and New Zealand	Australia	New Zealand	Australia: Go8	Australia: non-Go8
Continuing	324.4 (85.7%)	271.6 (85.2%)	52.8 (88.3%)	106 (85.5%)	165.6 (85%)
Fixed-term	31.4 (8.3%)	27.4 (8.6%)	4 (6.7%)	11 (8.9%)	16.4 (8.4%)
Fellowship	22.7 (6%)	19.7 (6.2%)	3 (5%)	7 (5.6%)	12.7 (6.5%)
TOTAL	378.5	318.7	59.8	124	194.7

Table 1: Australia and New Zealand 2022: Full-time equivalent (FTE) appointment type by country and sector

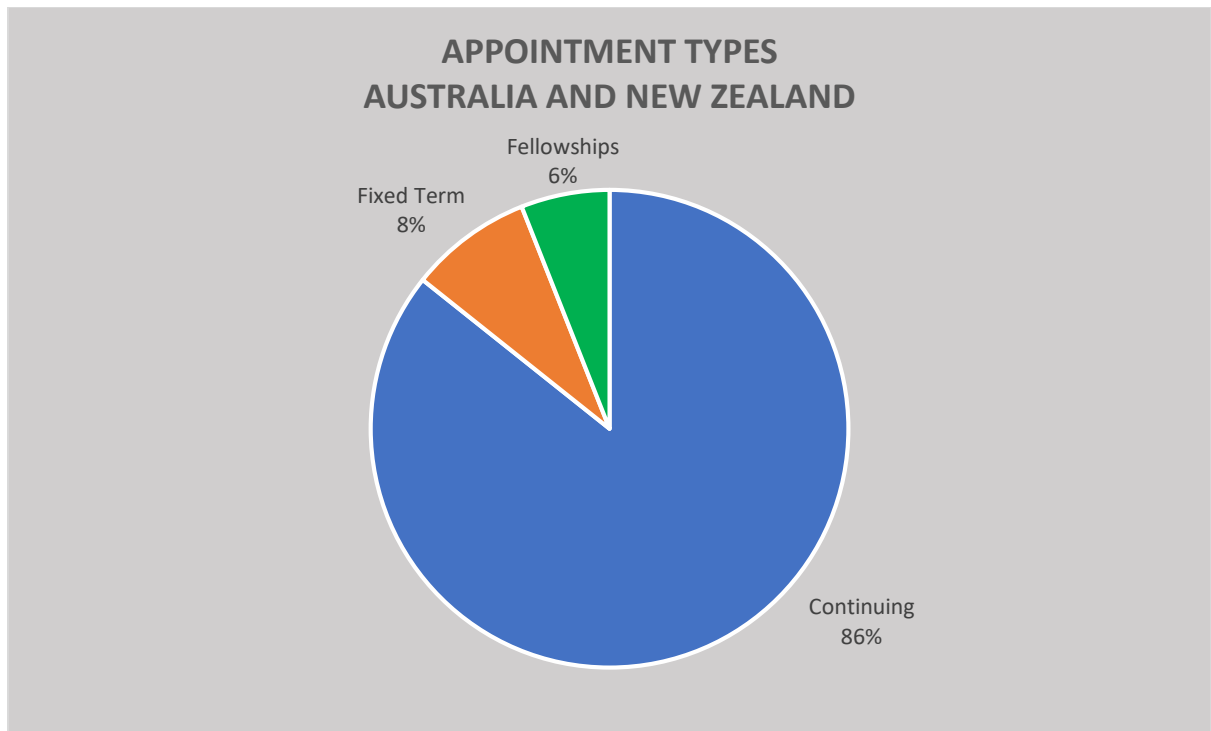


Figure 1: Australia and New Zealand combined 2022: appointment type

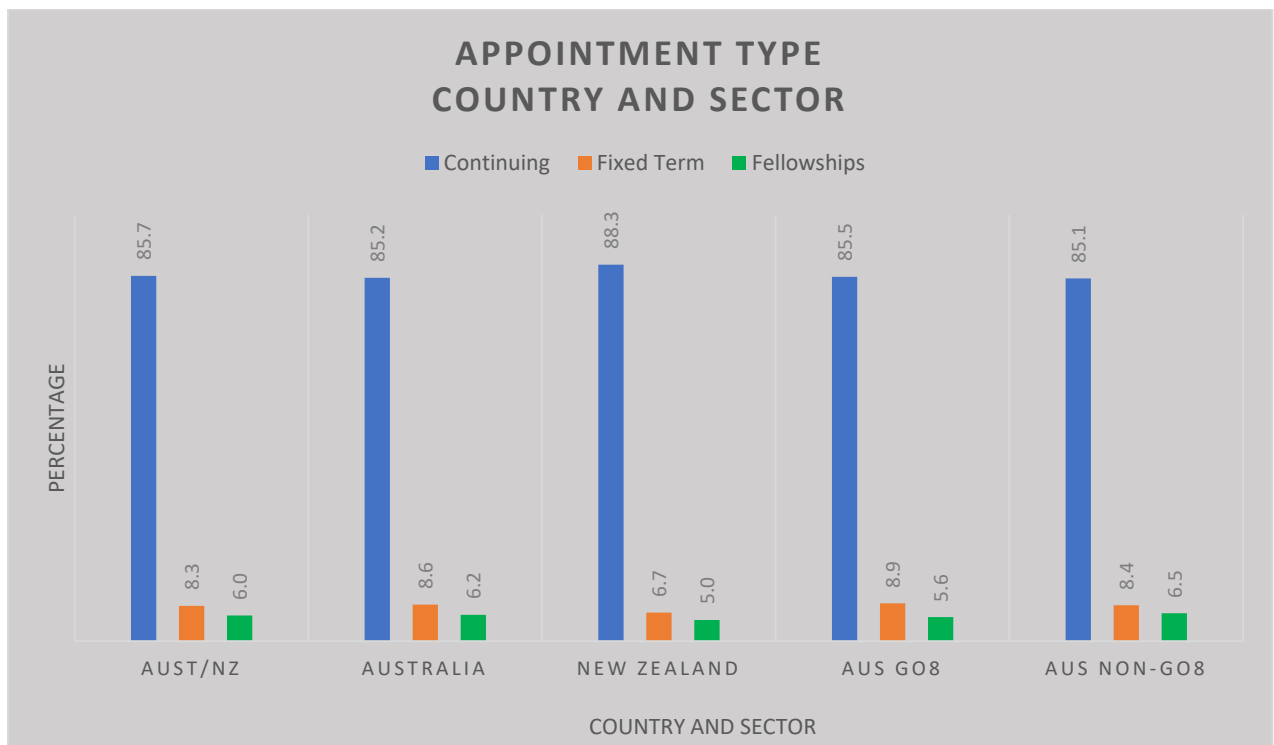


Figure 2: Australia vs New Zealand 2022: proportion of appointment type by country and sector

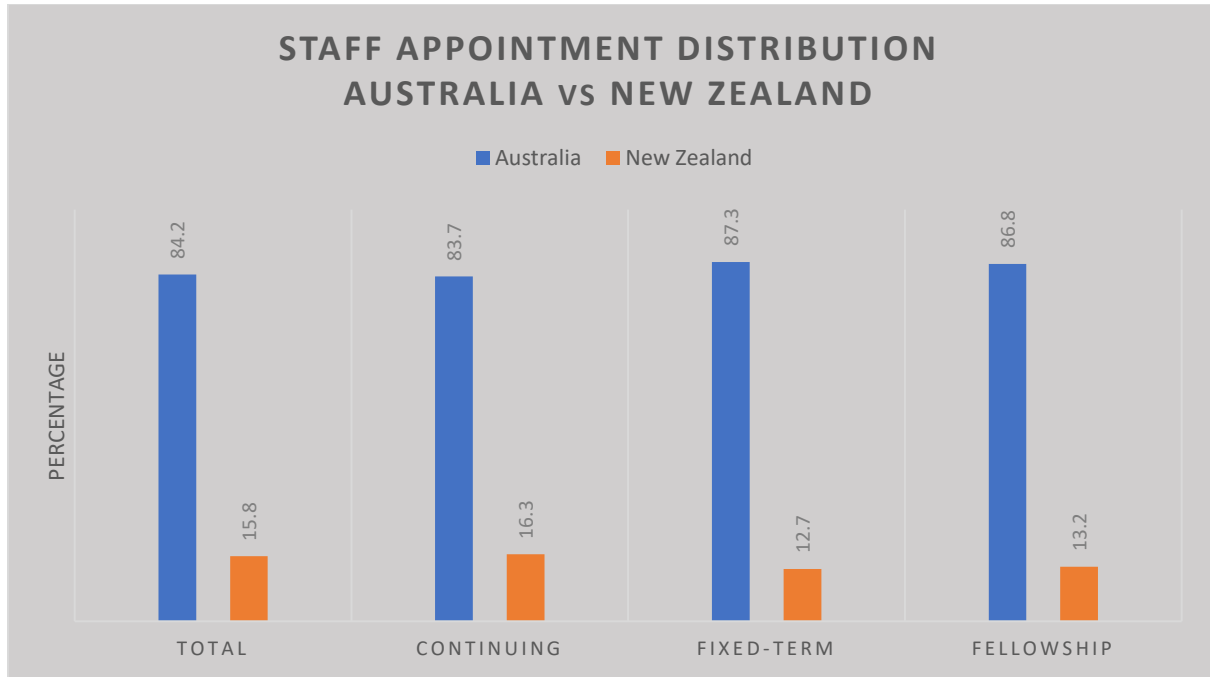


Figure 3: Australia vs New Zealand 2022: proportion of appointment type by country

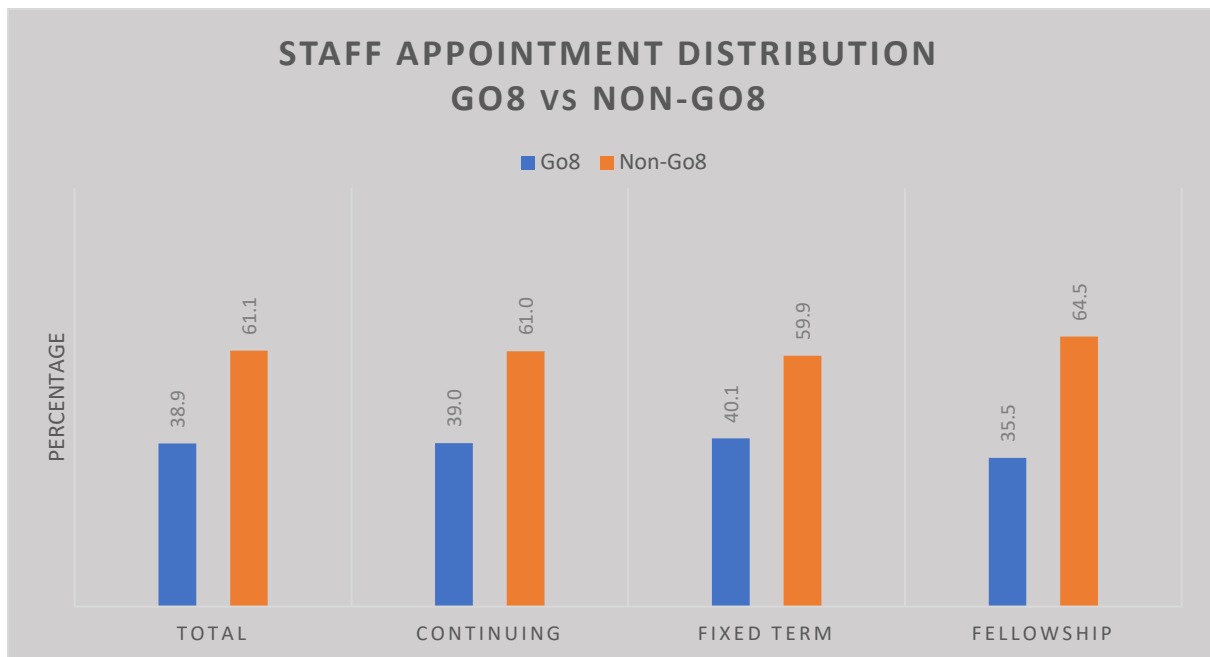


Figure 4: Australia 2022: proportion of appointment type by sector

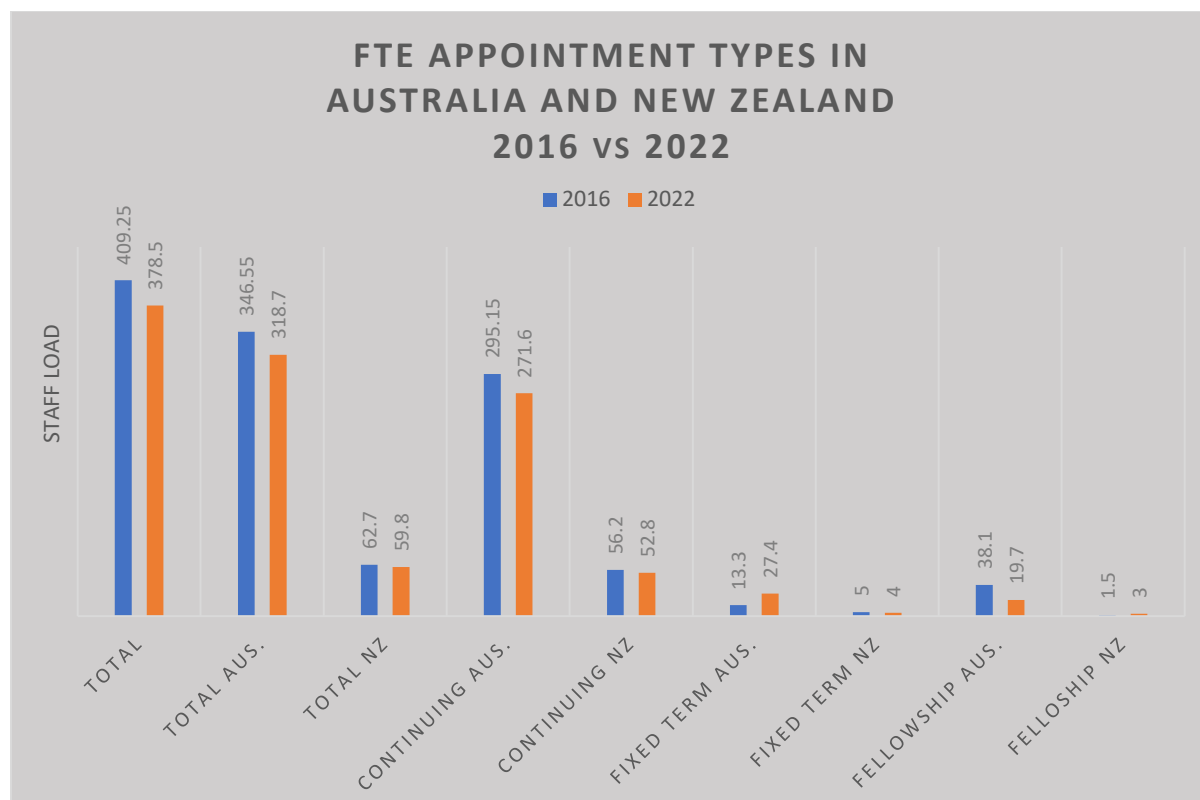


Figure 5: Australia and New Zealand, 2016 and 2022 compared: FTE appointment type by country

Key findings

- In 2022, a total of 378.5 FTE (full-time equivalent) historians were employed in History groupings in Australia and New Zealand on continuing appointments, fixed-term appointments of one year or longer, or postdoctoral and other fellowships. As would be expected given Australia's much larger population, the number of historians in Australia greatly exceeded that in New Zealand, by a ratio of just over five to one. On a per capita basis the numbers of historians employed in each country were comparable, at approximately one historian for every 80-85,000 of population. This represents a considerable decline in the total full-time equivalent historians – 30.7 FTE positions or 7.5 percent - since this survey was last taken in 2016, when there was one historian for every 70-75,000 of population. (The comparative data is displayed in Figure 5.)
- In 2022, the majority of historians – 85.7 percent – were employed in continuing roles. Approximately 8 percent were appointed to fixed-term contracts and 6 percent occupied postdoctoral and other fellowships. The portion of historians in continuing roles remains the same as in 2016, although in the portion on fixed-term contracts has doubled while the portion on postdoctoral and other fellowships has almost halved. This perhaps reflects the current dearth of research funding opportunities – and the increased competitiveness of existing funding schemes – for historians.
- There was consistency between Australia and New Zealand in terms of the division of appointment types in 2022 (Figure 3). For example, New Zealand accounted for 15.8 percent of the overall number of historians; 16.3 percent of those on continuing contracts, 12.7 percent of those on fixed-term appointments and 13.2 percent of those on postdoctoral and other fellowships.
- In terms of the staff appointment profile in 2022, there was a high degree of similarity within Australia between the Go8 universities and the non-Go8 sector (Figure 4). Many

more historians were employed in the non-Go8 sector (reflecting the greater number of universities in this category), but the portion of historians employed in the continuing, fixed-term and fellowship categories were almost identical across the two sectors. This represents a considerable change since 2016, when the proportion of staff on postdoctoral or other fellowships was more than twice as high in Go8 universities than the non-Go8 sector.²⁰ Fellowship holders are now nearly twice as likely to belong to non-Go8 universities.

Conclusions

Precise long-term historical comparisons are not possible because of a lack of reliable data and the different methodologies of surveys conducted before 2016. However, it appears that in both countries the number of historians has declined significantly over the past fifty years. Geoffrey Serle reported 320 historians in continuing positions in Australian History departments in 1973, and perhaps 420 once temporary appointments were included.²¹ The most comparable numbers now are 271.6 FTE (continuing) and 299 FTE (continuing plus fixed-term), rising to 318.7 FTE if postdoctoral and other fellowship holders are included. This suggests a substantial decline in absolute terms (e.g. a 15 percent decline in continuing positions), and an even greater one in relative terms given the increased number of universities, university staff and student body overall. Since 2016, when this survey's methodology was adopted, the total number of staff (continuing, fixed-term and fellowship-holders) in Australia has declined by 8 percent. The decline has been entirely confined to the Go8 universities, as the total number of staff actually rose by 4.5 FTE positions in the non-Go8 sector).²² The decline has been most pronounced in the area of postdoctoral and other fellowships, where 18.4 FTE fewer historians were employed in 2022 (a 49.3 percent reduction), and continuing appointments. Conversely, the number of historians employed on fixed-term contracts doubled from 13.3 FTE to 27.4 FTE. Taken together, these results point to the increasingly precarious nature of academic work in History in Australia.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that there has also been a significant decline in the number of New Zealand university historians, although the decline occurred later than in Australia and was concentrated in the decade and a half after 2000. Since 2016, the total number of staff on continuing and fixed-term contracts and fellowships in New Zealand has fallen by 4.6 percent, meaning the decline in positions in this country has occurred at approximately half the rate of Australia. The number of historians on fixed-term contracts or postdoctoral and other fellowships was very small in both 2016 and 2022, rendering any analysis of change in these categories over this period statistically insignificant.

Staffing Seniority

Three further ways in which the staffing of Australian and New Zealand universities can be analysed are by level of appointment or seniority, and by gender and ethnicity. This section looks at the seniority profiles of History staff. It focusses on continuing appointments as this is the only academic employment category where there are sufficient numbers in New Zealand and in the Go8 and non-Go8 Australian sectors for meaningful comparisons. Moreover, the uneven distribution of fixed-term appointments and of postdoctoral and other

²⁰ For the 2016 data, see Martin Crotty and Paul Sendziuk, "The Numbers Game: History Staffing in Australian and New Zealand Universities", *Australian Historical Studies*, vol.50, no. 3, 2019, p. 359.

²¹ Serle, "The State of the Profession", pp. 686-7.

²² For the 2016 data, see Crotty and Sendziuk, "The Numbers Game", p. 359.

fellowships, both of which are typically held at lecturer level, means that they would have a distorting effect if included.

Results

	Australia and New Zealand	Australia	New Zealand	Australia: Go8	Australia: non-Go8
Professor	85.1 (26.2%)	68.3 (25.1%)	16.8 (31.8%)	34.2 (32.3%)	34.1 (20.6%)
Associate Professor	92 (28.4%)	74 (27.2%)	18 (34.1%)	29 (27.4%)	45 (27.2%)
Senior Lecturer	97.3 (30%)	84.3 (31%)	13 (24.6%)	26.8 (25.3%)	57.5 (34.7%)
Lecturer	48 (14.8%)	43 (15.8%)	5 (9.5%)	15 (14.2%)	28 (16.9%)
Associate Lecturer	2 (0.6%)	2 (0.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.9%)	1 (0.6%)
TOTAL	324.4	271.6	52.8	106	165.6

Table 2: Australia and New Zealand 2022: FTE continuing appointments by seniority, country and sector

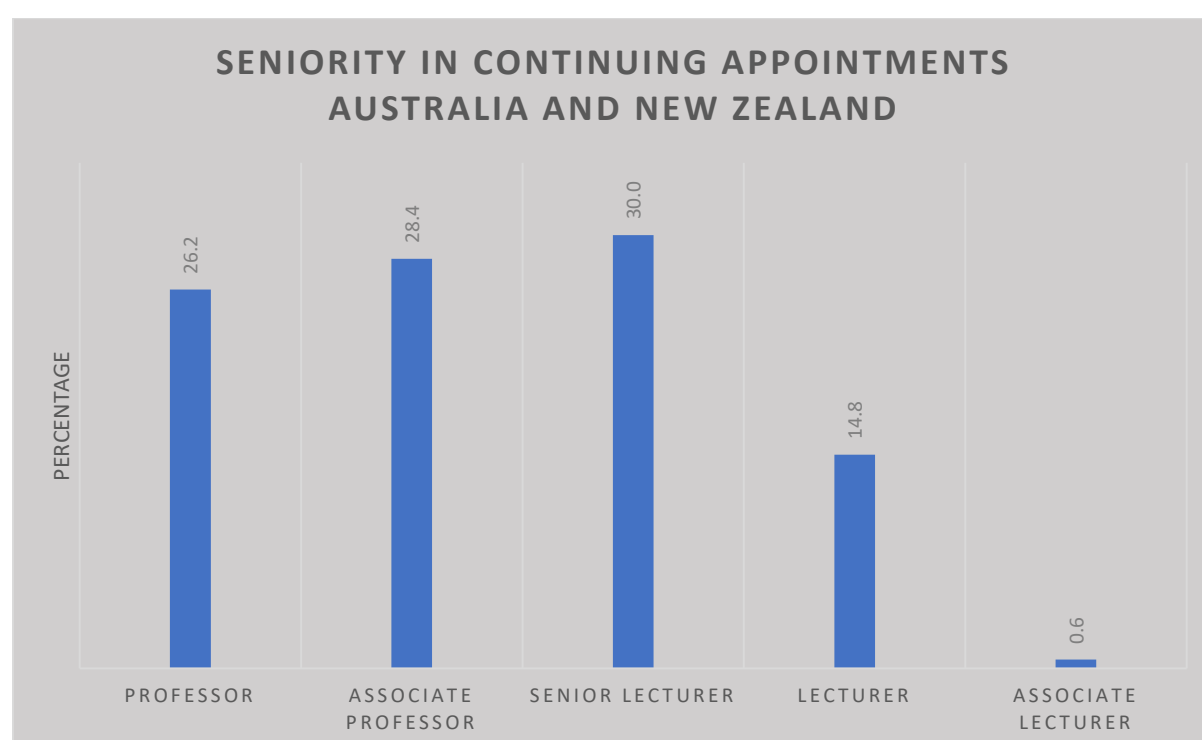


Figure 6: Australia and New Zealand combined 2022: proportion of continuing appointments by seniority

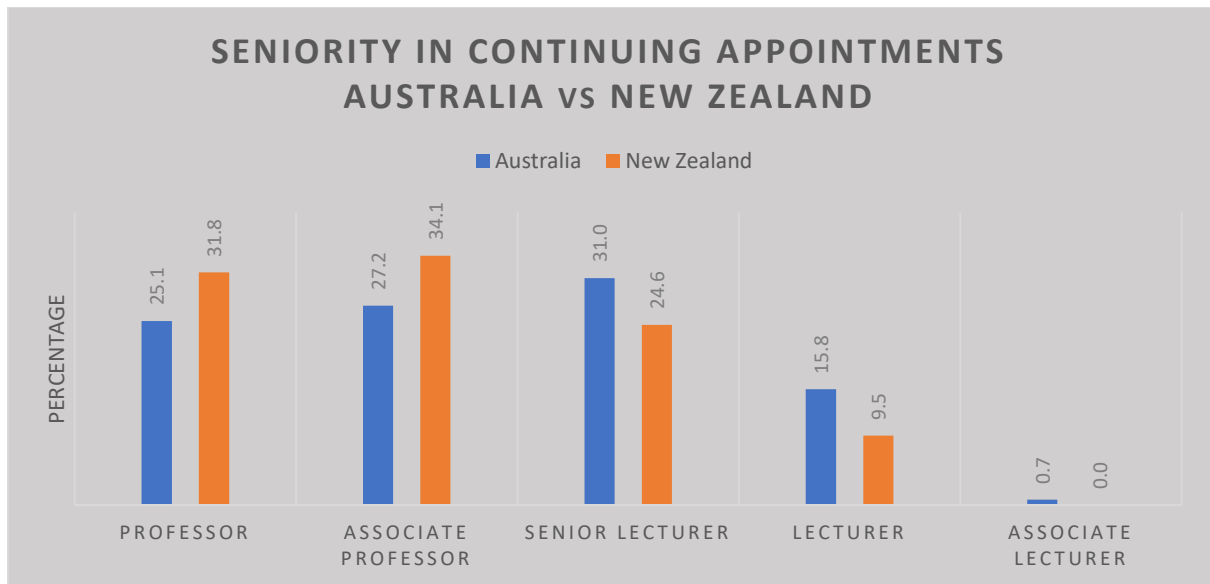


Figure 7: Australia vs New Zealand 2022: proportion of continuing appointments by seniority and country

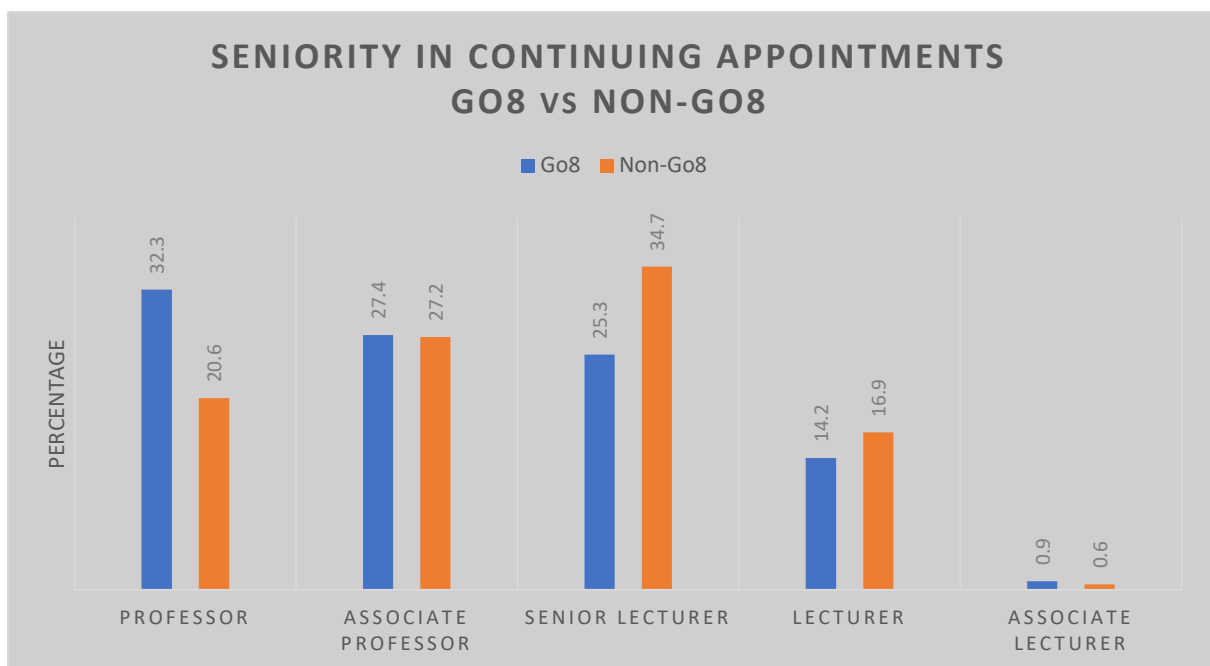


Figure 8: Australia 2022: proportion of continuing appointments by seniority and sector

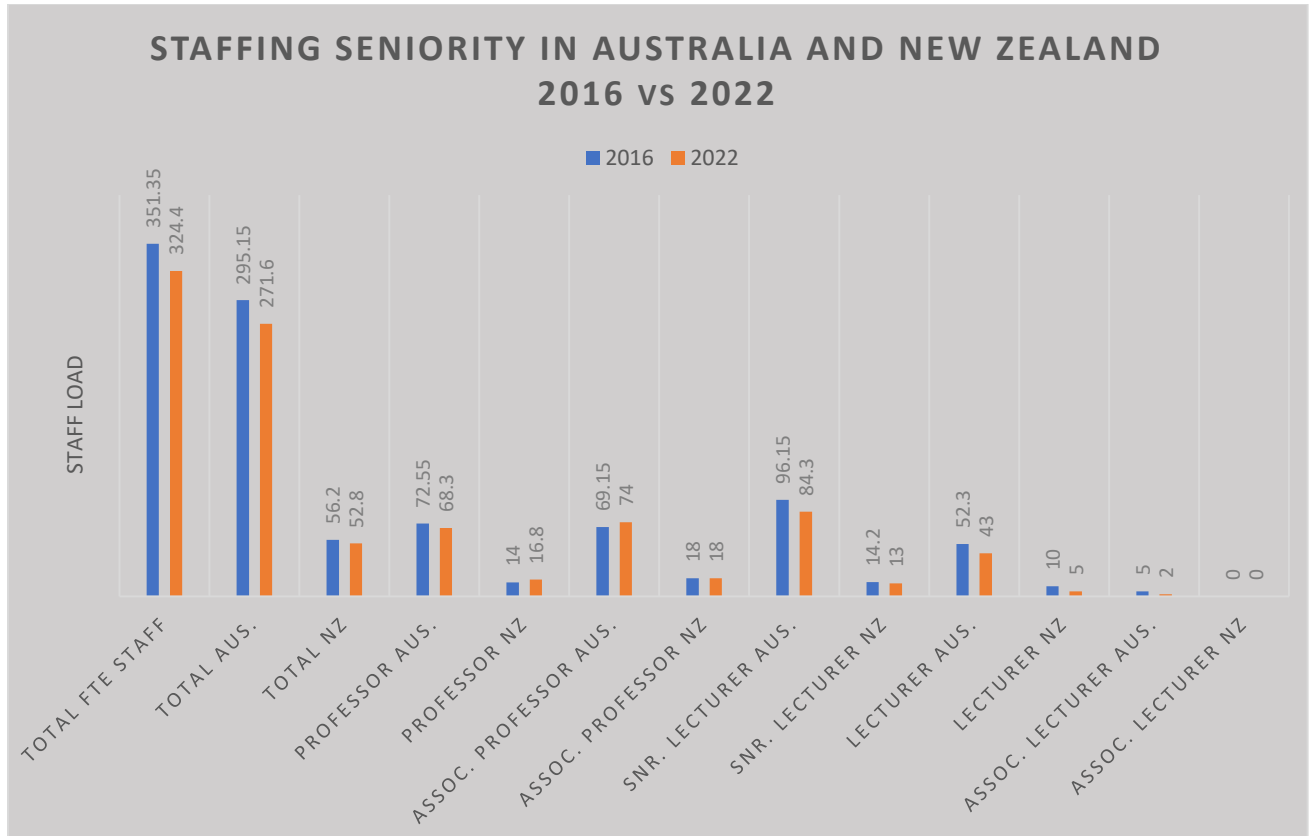


Figure 9: Australia vs New Zealand, 2016 and 2022 compared: FTE continuing appointments by seniority and country

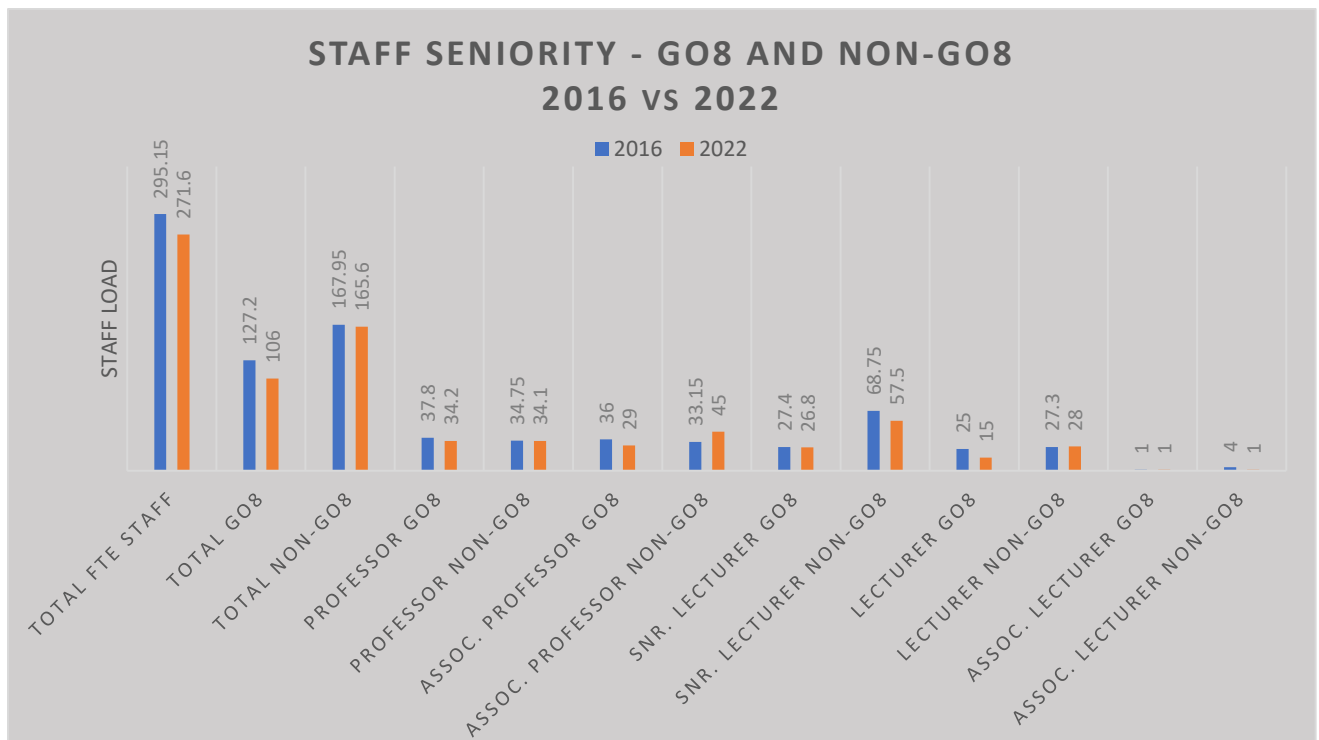


Figure 10: Australia, 2016 and 2022 compared: FTE continuing appointments by seniority and sector

Key findings

- For continuing positions across all History groupings in Australia and New Zealand, there was a higher proportion of staff holding appointments at professor or associate professor level (54.6 percent), than at the combined three levels below (45.4 percent). In the 2016 survey, the proportion was split evenly at 50 percent each. The profession has thus become more 'senior'. This is to be expected in a context of declining staff numbers and is the result of relatively few new appointments (especially at junior levels) in past five years.
- The staffing profile of New Zealand History groupings was significantly more senior than that of Australian ones, with 65.9 percent of New Zealand continuing historians being professors or associate professors, compared to 52.4 percent in the Australian context. The difference is apparent at both the professor and associate professor level.
- Within Australia, there was a marked difference in the seniority profiles of Go8 and non-Go8 History groupings. 32.3 percent of continuing staff in Go8s were at the level of professor, compared to 20.6 percent of staff in non-Go8 History groupings. (The gap between the two has grown slightly since the 2016 survey.) The portion of continuing staff who are associate professors, however, is the same in both the Go8 and non-Go8 sectors, reflecting a significant increase in positions at this level in non-Go8 universities since the survey was last conducted in 2016. In 2022, there was a noticeable "bulge" in the non-Go8 staffing profile at senior lecturer level which is not apparent at Go8 institutions (34.7 percent compared to 25.3 percent), and this was also the case in 2016 when the figures were 41 percent compared to 21.5 percent.

Conclusions

The staffing profile of Australian and New Zealand historians on continuing appointments was considerably more senior than revealed in past surveys. Past surveys suggest that 21 percent of History staff in Australian universities were professors or associate professors in 1954, and that this figure rose to 25 percent by 1973.²³ It has more than doubled since 1973 (including an increase of 4.6 percent since 2016). It should be noted, however, that the virtual disappearance of full-time or fractional senior tutor and tutor positions means that staff profiles from 1973 and 2016 or 2022 are not directly comparable.

There was substantial difference in the seniority profiles of New Zealand and Australian historians, primarily at the professor level. The significance of the difference should, perhaps, not be overstated because the relatively small number of professors in New Zealand. It does, however, suggest that a spate of retirements may be coming in New Zealand, which will have a substantial impact on the discipline and higher education. That there were only five continuing History staff at 'lecturer' level in New Zealand in 2022 indicates that few new continuing History positions have been created in the past five or so years, and that succession planning and renewal needs to be firmly on the mind of university administrators in that country.

There was a marked difference between Australian Go8 and non-Go8 seniority profiles, although the gap has narrowed since 2016. In 2022, 59.6 percent of continuing staff in Go8 universities held appointments at professor or associate professor level, as compared to 47.8 percent in the non-Go8 sector (the corresponding figures in 2016 were 58 percent and 41 percent). The difference may reflect a desire on the part of high-achieving History academics to be based in Go8 universities. But there are also other possible explanations,

²³ Serle, "The State of the Profession in Australia", pp. 686-7.

such as greater research opportunities and support in the Go8 sector, and more endowed chairs. In 2022 there were 11.8 FTE more historians employed at associate professor level in non-Go8 universities than in 2016, and 11.3 FTE historians fewer at senior lecturer level, suggesting that historians in this sector are being promoted and that more will soon join the ranks of professor, thus further narrowing the gap between appointments at this level at Go8 and non-Go8 universities.

Gender and Appointment Types

Gender imbalances have long been a concern for the university-based historical profession, with good reason. A significant gender imbalance both in terms of the number of appointments and the seniority of female staff has until recently been a feature of Australian and New Zealand staffing profiles. In Australia in 1970 there were approximately seven male historians to every female, a ratio that changed little in the following decade. By 1995 the imbalance had narrowed significantly, but there were still 3.5 male historians for every female. The ratios at professorial level were even more unbalanced – approximately 16 to one in 1970, 8.5 to one in 1980 and 5.5 to one in 1995.²⁴ The situation was little better in New Zealand. In 1977 Dorothy Page and Barbra Brookes lamented that none of the twelve History professors in New Zealand were women, and that of the eighty-five History academics in New Zealand universities, only seventeen, or one in every five, were women.²⁵ Women have also been concentrated in less secure employment. Such gender imbalances in History were reflective of those in Australian and New Zealand academia more generally.²⁶

Since the 1970s, changing ideals, activism, affirmative action policies and equal opportunity commitments, whether led by governments, university leadership, the profession or individual History groupings have attempted to shift the overall gender imbalance, and have also attempted to rectify the problem of women being concentrated at lower levels of seniority. This has, however, been a slow process, not aided by low rates of staff turnover in many institutions, nor by slow rates of hiring in an extended period of stagnating or declining staff numbers.

Nevertheless, the 2016 survey revealed that the gender gap had significantly narrowed in both Australia and New Zealand in the preceding decades. In 2016 women occupied 49 percent of all History positions in Australia and New Zealand, 47 percent of continuing positions, 44 percent of fixed-term appointments and 71 percent of postdoctoral and other fellowship positions. This represented a dramatic transformation from as late as the mid-1990s. When the figures were broken down by country, the results were similar for Australia and New Zealand (with gender disparity in New Zealand being slightly more apparent). Within Australia, there were only relatively minor variations between the Go8 and non-Go8 sector in terms of gender representation in different categories of employment. While women occupied 43 percent of the fixed-term positions in non-Go8 universities and just 25 percent

²⁴ Norman Etherington, "The Historical Profession in Our Universities: Trends and Prospects", *Australian Historical Association Bulletin*, no. 83, 1996, pp. 30-1.

²⁵ Dorothy Page and Barbara Brookes, "Women in the Historical Profession in New Zealand", *Australian Historical Association Bulletin*, no. 52, October 1977, pp. 22-3.

²⁶ Macintyre, Brett and Croucher, *No End of a Lesson*, pp. 114, 119; Page and Brookes, "Women in the Historical Profession in New Zealand", p. 22.

of similar positions in Go8 universities, the numbers were so small as to make the difference statistically insignificant.

In our report of the findings of the 2016 survey, we noted that women being predominant in postdoctoral and other fellowships could be viewed pessimistically as an indication of disadvantage (in that such fellowships are temporary and thus offering less security of employment than continuing positions), but that such predominance in fellowships (and in postgraduate studies) might suggest that women were likely to predominate in future recruitment. We stated that “it is likely, on the basis of these figures, that within the next 5-10 years women will come to occupy more than 50 percent of all positions overall, and more than 50 percent of continuing positions”.²⁷ As the 2022 survey data reported below reveals, our prophesy has been fulfilled.

Methodological note: Unlike 2016, in the 2022 survey an option was given for staff to be identified as non-binary or ‘other’ gender.

Results

	Female	Male	Non-Binary/Other	Total
Total appointments	200.4 (52.9%)	176.1 (46.5%)	2 (0.5%)	378.5
Continuing	161 (49.6%)	161.4 (49.8%)	2 (0.6%)	324.4
Fixed-term	22.4 (71.3%)	9 (28.7%)	0 (0%)	31.4
Fellowship	17 (74.9%)	5.7 (25.1%)	0 (0%)	22.7

Table 3: Australia and New Zealand 2022: FTE staff and proportion of appointment type by gender

²⁷ Crotty and Sendziuk, “The State of the Discipline”, p. 17.

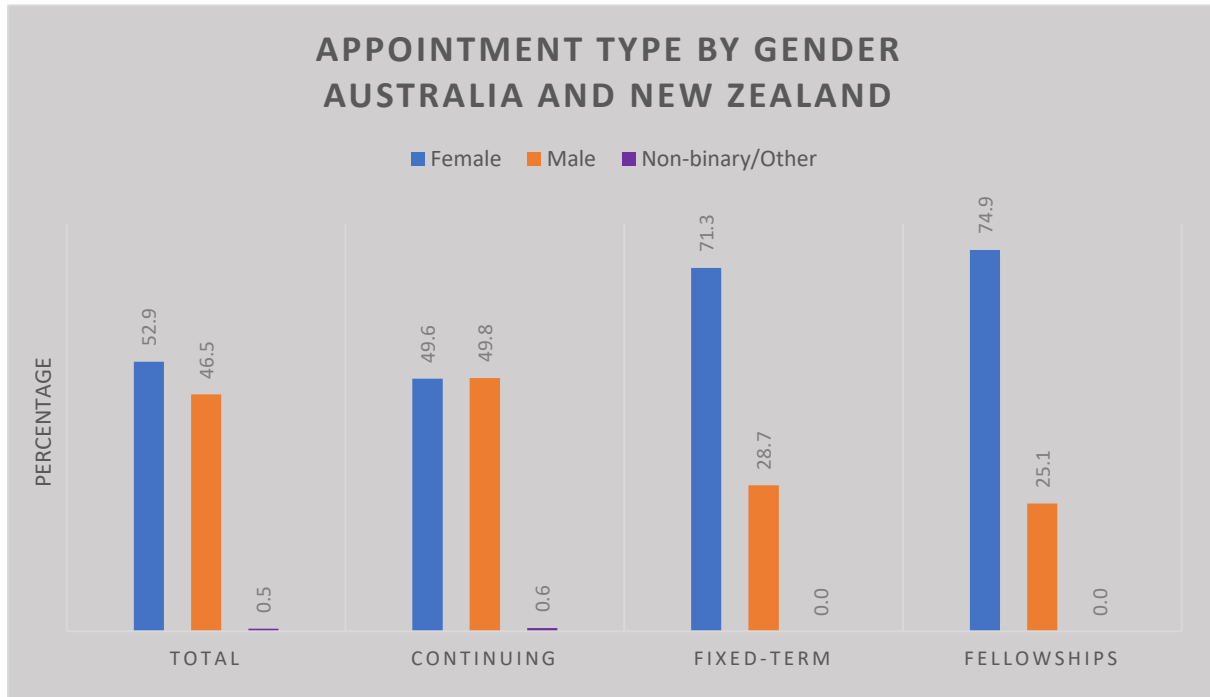


Figure 11: Australia and New Zealand combined 2022: appointment type by gender

	Female	Male	Non-Binary/Other	Total
Total: Australia	168.1 (52.7%)	149.6 (46.9%)	1 (0.3%)	318.7
Total: New Zealand	32.3 (54%)	26.5 (44.3%)	1 (1.7%)	59.8
Continuing: Australia	135.7 (50%)	134.9 (49.7%)	1 (0.3%)	271.6
Continuing: New Zealand	25.3 (47.9%)	26.5 (50.2%)	1 (1.9%)	52.8
Fixed-term: Australia	18.4 (67.2%)	9 (32.8%)	0 (0%)	27.4
Fixed-term: New Zealand	4 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4
Fellowships: Australia	14 (71.1%)	5.7 (28.9%)	0 (0%)	19.7
Fellowships: New Zealand	3 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3

Table 4: Australia and New Zealand 2022: appointment type by gender and country

APPOINTMENT TYPE BY GENDER - AUSTRALIA VS NEW ZEALAND

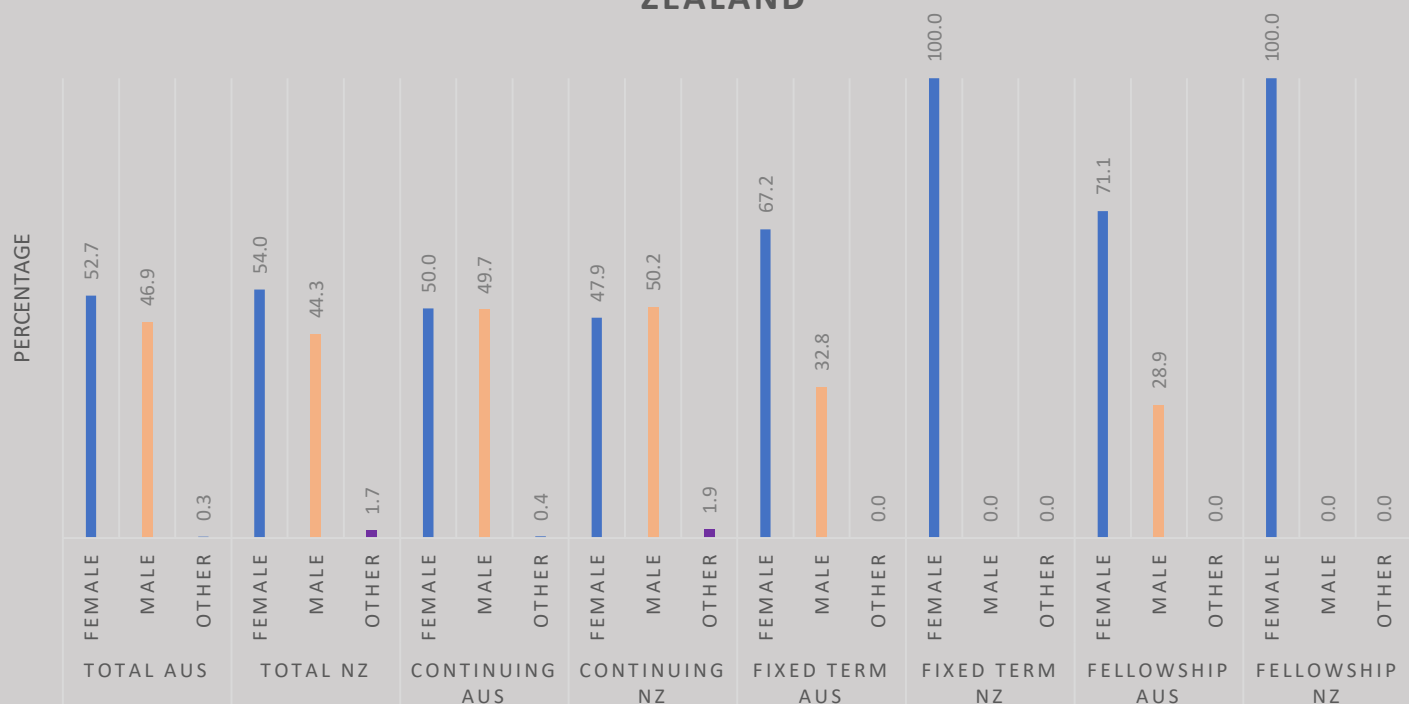


Figure 12: Australia vs New Zealand 2022: appointment type by gender and country

	Female	Male	Non-Binary/Other	Total
Total Go8	58.7 (47.3%)	65.3 (52.7%)	0 (0%)	124
Total non-Go8	109.4 (56.2%)	84.3 (43.3%)	1 (0.5%)	194.7
Continuing Go8	49.2 (46.4%)	56.8 (53.6%)	0 (0%)	106
Continuing non-Go8	86.5 (52.2%)	78.1 (47.2%)	1 (0.6%)	165.6
Fixed-term Go8	5.5 (50%)	5.5 (50%)	0 (0%)	11
Fixed-term non-Go8	12.9 (78.7%)	3.5 (21.3%)	0 (0%)	16.4
Fellowships Go8	4 (57.1%)	3 (42.9%)	0 (0%)	7
Fellowships non-Go8	10 (78.7%)	2.7 (21.3%)	0 (0%)	12.7

Table 5: Australia 2022: appointment type by gender and sector

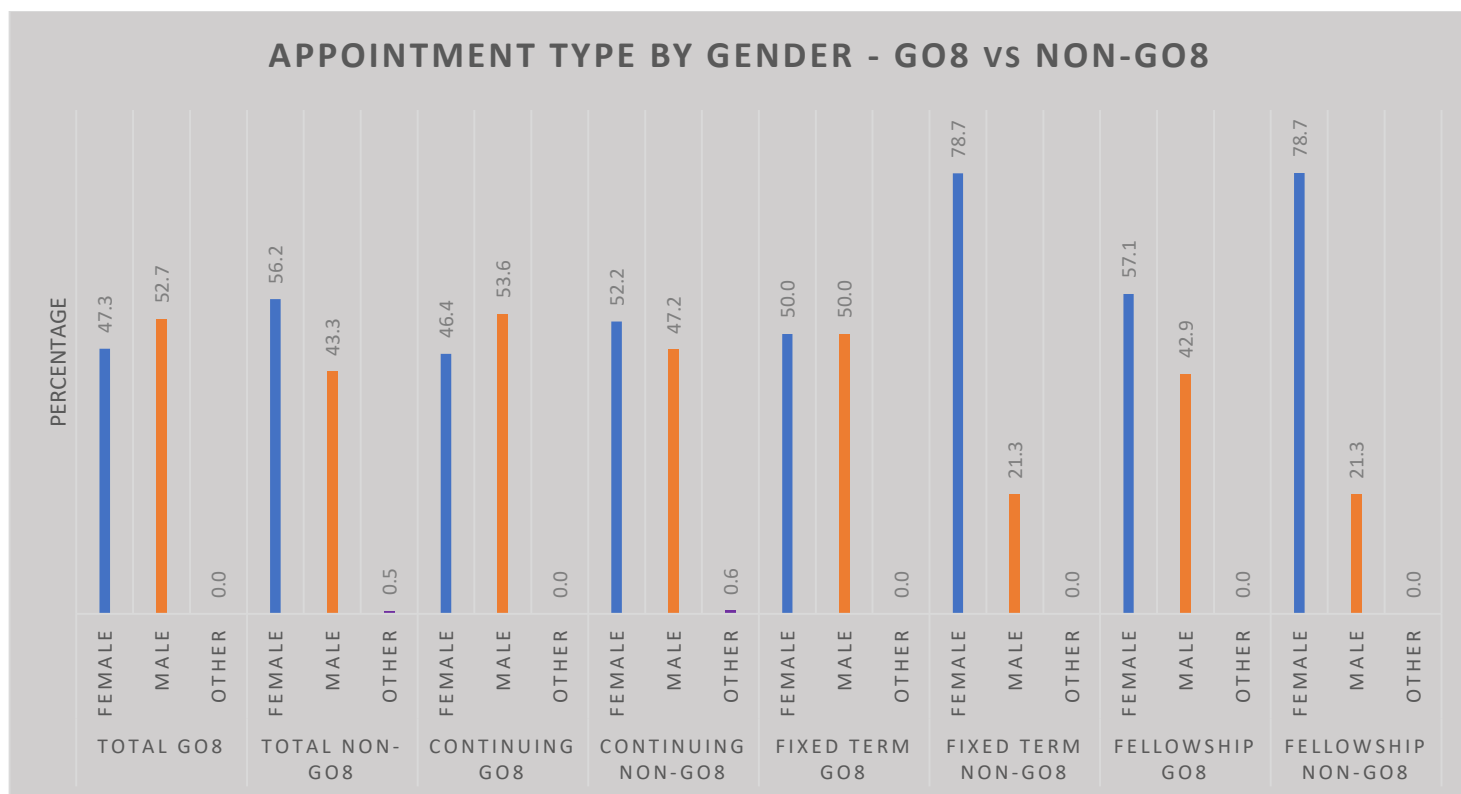


Figure 13: Australia 2022: appointment type by gender and sector

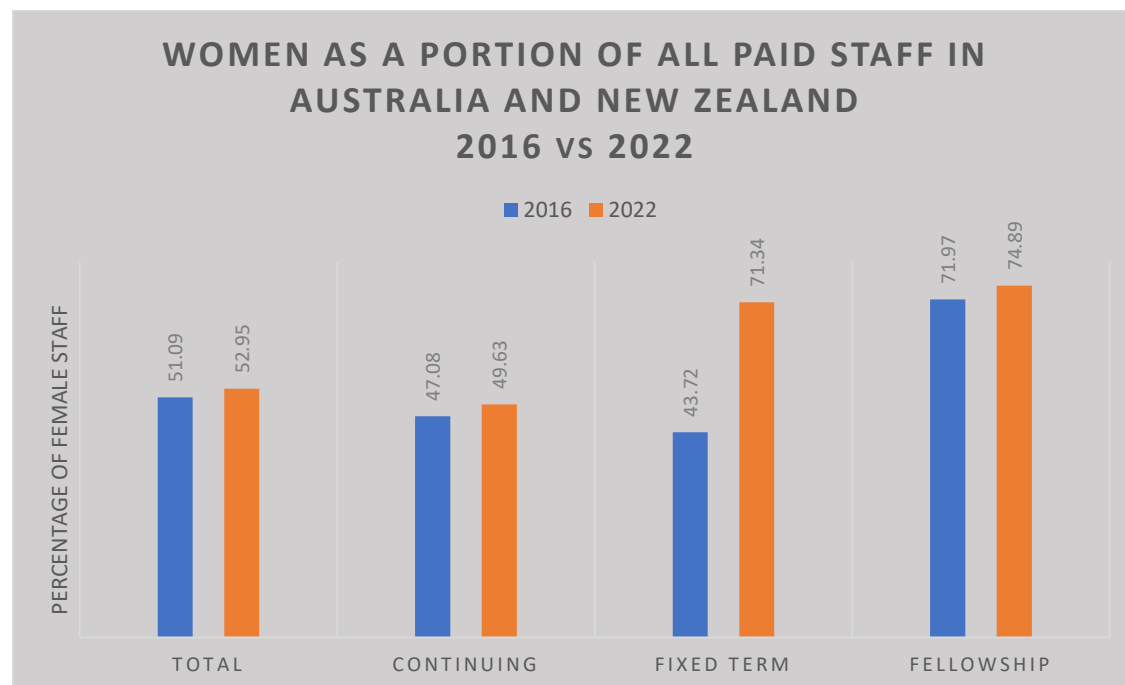


Figure 14: Australia and New Zealand, 2016 and 2022 compared: women as a portion of all paid staff by appointment type

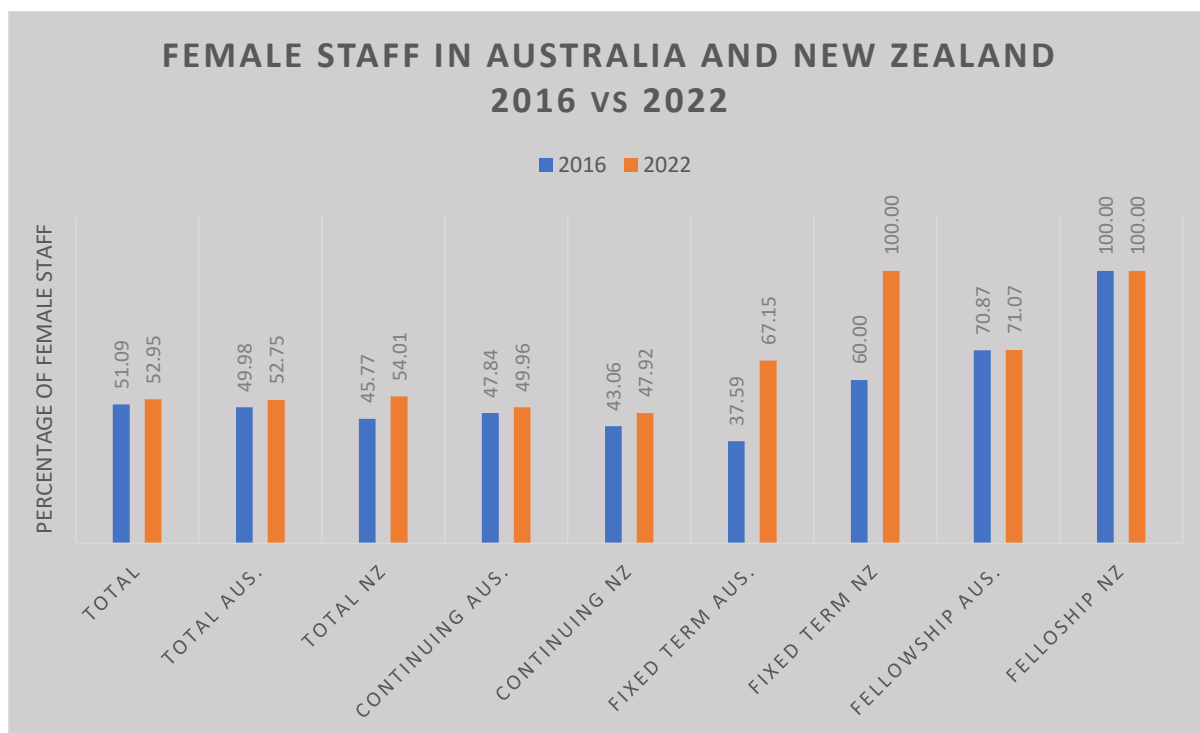


Figure 15: Australia and New Zealand, 2016 and 2022 compared: women as a proportion of all paid staff by appointment type and country

Key findings

- Across all employment categories combined (continuing, fixed-term and postdoctoral and other fellowships), women outnumbered male historians in History discipline formations in Australia and New Zealand in 2022. There were 200.4 FTE females and 176.1 FTE males, which translates in proportional terms to 52.9 percent female and 46.5 percent male. There were two non-binary History staff members across the two countries (0.5 percent of all historians).
- Women have typically suffered from less security of employment and from being concentrated in the lower ranks of the profession. However, our survey reveals that across Australia and New Zealand (combined) in 2022, there was parity between men and women in terms of continuing positions. Women were over-represented in fixed-term appointments (71.3 percent) and postdoctoral and other fellowships (74.9 percent). In the future, women in these positions are best placed to secure new continuing appointments when they are advertised.
- In Australia, across all employment categories combined (continuing, fixed-term and postdoctoral and other fellowships), women outnumbered male historians. They occupied 52.7 percent of all academic positions in History in Australia in 2022, held a slightly higher percentage of the continuing appointments (50 percent compared to 49.7 percent male), and were significantly over-represented in fixed-term appointments (67.8 percent) and postdoctoral and other fellowships (71.1 percent).
- The situation in New Zealand almost mirrors that in Australia, although female historians outnumber male historians by a slightly larger margin (54 percent of all historians compared to 44.3 percent male and 1.7 percent non-binary). In 2022 they were slightly under-represented in continuing positions (47.9 percent compared to 50.2 percent male and 1.9 percent non-binary), though held *all* of the fixed-term and postdoctoral and other fellowships.

- Gender disparity was thus slightly more marked in favour of women in New Zealand in 2022 (at least in terms of overall numbers, if not in continuing positions), reversing the situation of 2016 where the New Zealand staffing profile was more typical of a profession in which women suffer disadvantage. (In 2016 women held 46 percent of positions overall and only 43 percent of continuing positions.)
- Within Australia in 2022, there were some variations between the Go8 and non-Go8 sector in terms of gender representation in different categories of employment. While women occupied 47.3 percent of the total number of History positions in Go8 universities, they held 56.2 percent in the non-Go8 sector. The gap was slightly wider for continuing positions but non-existent for fixed-term appointments. There were more than twice as many female fellowship holders at non-Go8 than at Go8 universities (and in both cases they outnumbered male fellowship holders), but the numbers were so small as to make the difference statistically insignificant.

Conclusions

In terms of number of appointments and access to secure employment in History, the gender gap has significantly narrowed in both Australia and New Zealand over the past few decades and since 2016 has flipped in favour of women. In 2022 women occupied 52.9 percent of all History positions in Australia and New Zealand, 49.6 percent of continuing positions, 71.3 percent of fixed-term appointments and 74.9 percent of postdoctoral and other fellowship positions. This represents a dramatic transformation from as late as the mid-1990s when men outnumbered women by a factor of approximately 3.5 to one. The change has been pronounced, though not dramatic, since 2016, when women occupied 49 percent of all History positions, 47 percent of continuing positions, 44 percent of fixed-term appointments and 71 percent of postdoctoral and other fellowship positions (and the disparity in New Zealand was even greater).

These figures demonstrate that the overall reduction in FTE History staff reported in a section above is an exclusively male phenomenon. The male proportion of History staff in Australia and New Zealand has declined by 15.1 percent since 2016 (a loss of more than 31 FTE positions, with 25 of these being continuing positions), whereas the number of women in FTE positions in History has remained almost the same, and actually increased in terms of continuing positions. Due to the historical gender disparity, which saw men hold the majority of positions, it is logical that more males than females have retired between the survey periods. Given the preponderance of women in HDR studies and postdoctoral and other fellowship positions, as well as deliberate measures to address the gender disparity, it is not surprising that women have secured the majority of new or replacement appointments, as we forecast in our previous report.

It should be noted that the figures regarding gender parity in History for Australia and New Zealand continue to compare favorably with those in the United Kingdom, where a 2015 report by the Royal Historical Society found much stronger gender disparities. That study found that women comprised just 38.5 percent of all academic History staff, and that only 73.2 percent of those women had permanent positions, as against 78.6 percent of the male historians.²⁸ A later report in 2018 found that the gender gap had narrowed, but was still significant. Women in History in UK universities comprised 41.6 percent of all staff and 26.2

²⁸ Royal Historical Society, *Gender Equality and Historians in UK Higher Education: A Report by the Royal Historical Society*, Royal Historical Society, London, 2015, pp. 3, 12.

percent of professorial staff.²⁹ Female historians in the United Kingdom thus suffer from significantly greater under-representation overall and were disproportionately concentrated in less secure employment. The Australian and New Zealand data also compares favourably with that of the US and Canada, where women comprise approximately 40 percent of History.³⁰

These figures also compare favourably with those of other Australian Humanities and Social Science disciplines. According to an ARC funded project, 'Gendered Excellence in the Social Sciences', led by Associate Professor Fiona Jenkins at the ANU, which compared gender balance in five disciplines, History performs better than most others. It finds that History is more gender balanced in its staff profile than other comparable disciplines such as Philosophy and Political Science. Only Sociology had a preponderance of female academics. The Sociology case, however, is somewhat distorted by a significant number of appointments at the Associate Lecturer level, the overwhelming majority of whom are female. Numbers in Sociology are approximately equal at senior lecturer level and above, so although there is a female preponderance in overall numbers, there is a much more marked concentration at the less senior levels of the discipline than in History at the time of the data collection.³¹

Gender and Seniority

Alongside the number and types of appointments, the seniority of female staff is a critical measure of gender equity. Women have traditionally been significantly over-represented in lower-ranking appointments, and under-represented at professor and associate professor level. Pre-2016 historical data cited above suggests that these disparities were marked, with for example, male History professors outnumbering their female counterparts in Australia by a factor of 5.5 in 1995, and all of the twelve History professors in New Zealand in 1977 being male.³² The gap had narrowed considerably by 2016, although men still held 58 percent of professorial positions and 56 percent of associate professor positions in History in Australia and New Zealand. Results from the 2022 survey show that this imbalance at the senior levels has all but disappeared.

(Note that this section focusses on continuing appointments as this is the only academic employment category where there are sufficient numbers in New Zealand and in the Go8 and non-Go8 Australian sectors for meaningful comparisons. Moreover, the uneven distribution of fixed-term appointments and of postdoctoral and other fellowships, both of which are typically held at lecturer level, means that they would have a distorting effect if included.)

²⁹ Royal Historical Society, *Promoting Gender Equality in UK History: A Second Report and Recommendations for Good Practice*, Royal Historical Society, London, 2018, p. 16.

³⁰ Gender Institute, ANU, "Workforce Data", <https://genderinstitute.anu.edu.au/gess/workforce-data>; accessed 26 July 2023.

³¹ Gender Institute, ANU, "Gendered Excellence in the Social Sciences", <http://genderinstitute.anu.edu.au/gess/academic-appointments-sociology-australia>; accessed 24 June 2023.

³² Etherington, "The Historical Profession in Our Universities", pp. 30-1; Page and Brookes, "Women in the Historical Profession in New Zealand", p. 22.

2022 Results

	Female	Male	Non-Binary/Other	Total
Total: Australia and New Zealand	161 (49.6%)	161.4 (49.8%)	2 (0.6%)	324.4
Total: Australia	135.7 (50%)	134.9 (49.7%)	1 (0.4%)	271.6
Total: New Zealand	25.3 (47.9%)	26.5 (50.2%)	1 (1.9%)	52.8
Professor: Australia and New Zealand	38 (44.7%)	47.1 (55.3%)	0 (0%)	85.1
Professor: Australia	29.2 (42.8%)	39.1 (57.2%)	0 (0%)	68.3
Professor: New Zealand	8.8 (52.4%)	8 (47.6%)	0 (0%)	16.8
Associate Professor: Australia and New Zealand	50.5 (54.9%)	40.5 (44%)	1 (1.1%)	92
Associate Professor: Australia	44 (59.5%)	30 (40.5%)	0 (0%)	74
Associate Professor: New Zealand	6.5 (36.1%)	10.5 (58.3%)	1 (5.6%)	18
Senior Lecturer: Australia and New Zealand	46.5 (47.8%)	50.8 (52.2%)	0 (0%)	97.3
Senior Lecturer: Australia	38.5 (45.7%)	45.8 (54.3%)	0 (0%)	84.3
Senior Lecturer: New Zealand	8 (61.5%)	5 (38.5%)	0 (0%)	13
Lecturer: Australia and New Zealand	24 (50%)	23 (47.9%)	1 (2.1%)	48
Lecturer: Australia	22 (51.2%)	20 (46.5%)	1 (2.3%)	43
Lecturer: New Zealand	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	0 (0%)	5
Associate Lecturer: Australia and New Zealand	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2
Associate Lecturer: Australia	2 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2
Associate Lecturer: New Zealand	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0

Table 6: Australia and New Zealand 2022: FTE continuing positions by country, gender and seniority

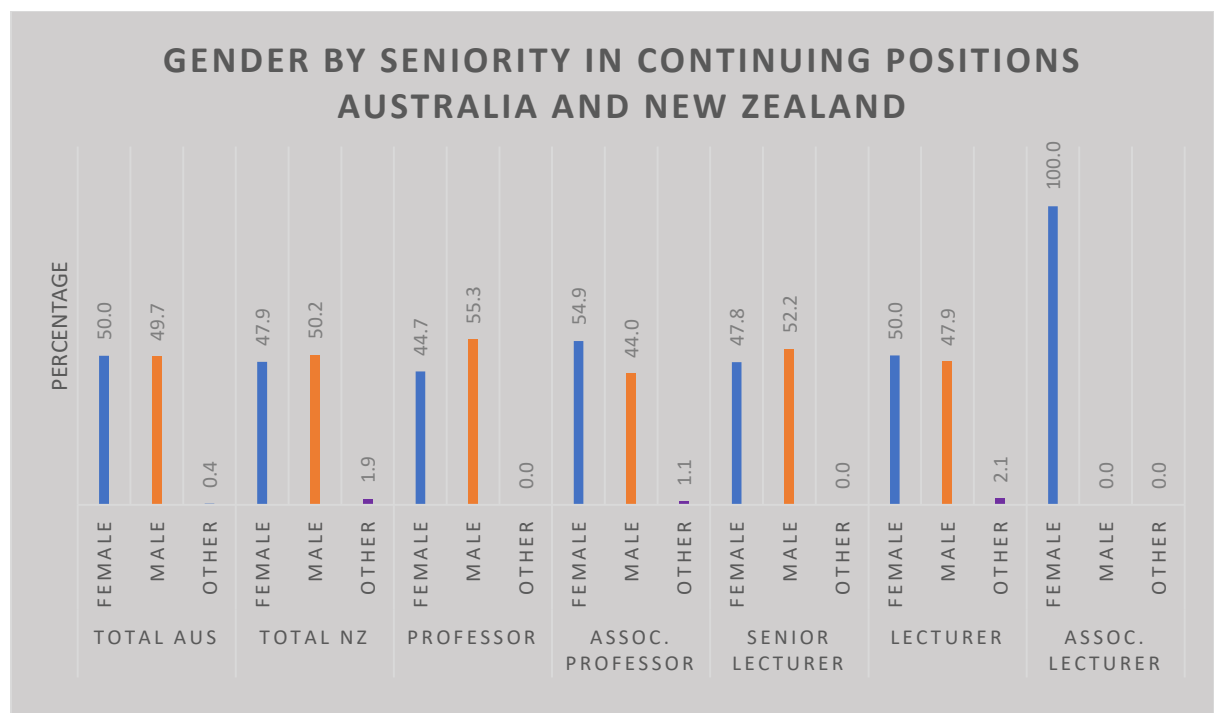


Figure 16: Australia and New Zealand 2022: proportion of continuing positions by gender and seniority

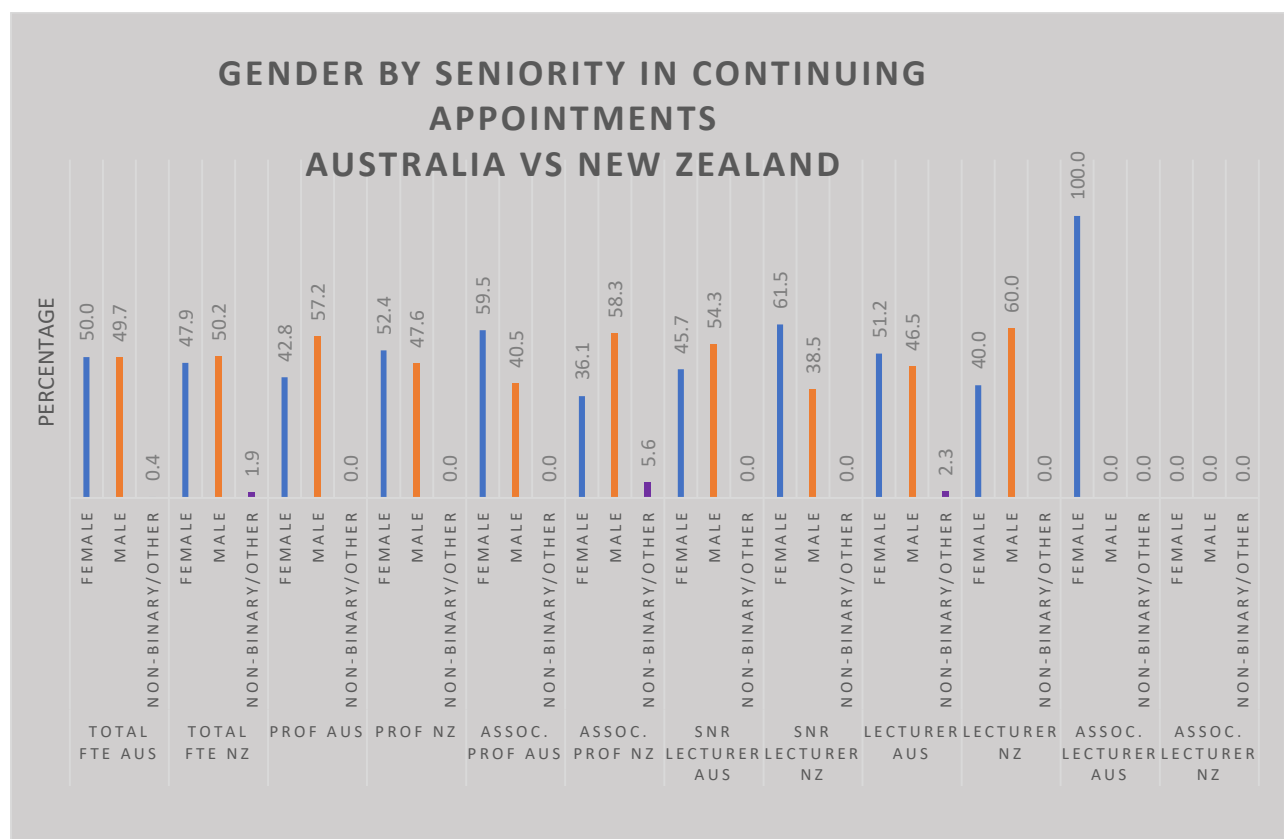


Figure 17: Australia vs New Zealand 2022: proportion of continuing positions by gender, country and seniority

	Female	Male	Non-Binary	Total
Total Go8	49.2 (46.4%)	56.8 (53.6%)	0 (0%)	106
Total non-Go8	86.5 (52.2%)	78.1 (47.2%)	1 (0.6%)	165.6
Professor: Go8	17.2 (50.3%)	17 (49.7%)	0 (0%)	34.2
Professor: non-Go8	12 (35.2%)	22.1 (64.8%)	0 (0%)	34.1
Associate Professor: Go8	15 (51.7%)	14 (48.3%)	0 (0%)	29
Associate Professor: non-Go8	29 (64.4%)	16 (35.6%)	0 (0%)	45
Senior Lecturer: Go8	10 (37.3%)	16.8 (62.7%)	0 (0%)	26.8
Senior Lecturer: non-Go8	28.5 (49.6%)	29 (50.4%)	0 (0%)	57.5
Lecturer: Go8	6 (40%)	9 (60%)	0 (0%)	15
Lecturer: non-Go8	16 (57.1%)	11 (39.3%)	1 (3.6%)	28
Associate Lecturer: Go8	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1
Associate Lecturer: non-Go8	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1

Table 7: Australia 2022: seniority by gender and sector

SENIORITY BY GENDER IN CONTINUING APPOINTMENTS GO8 vs NON-GO8

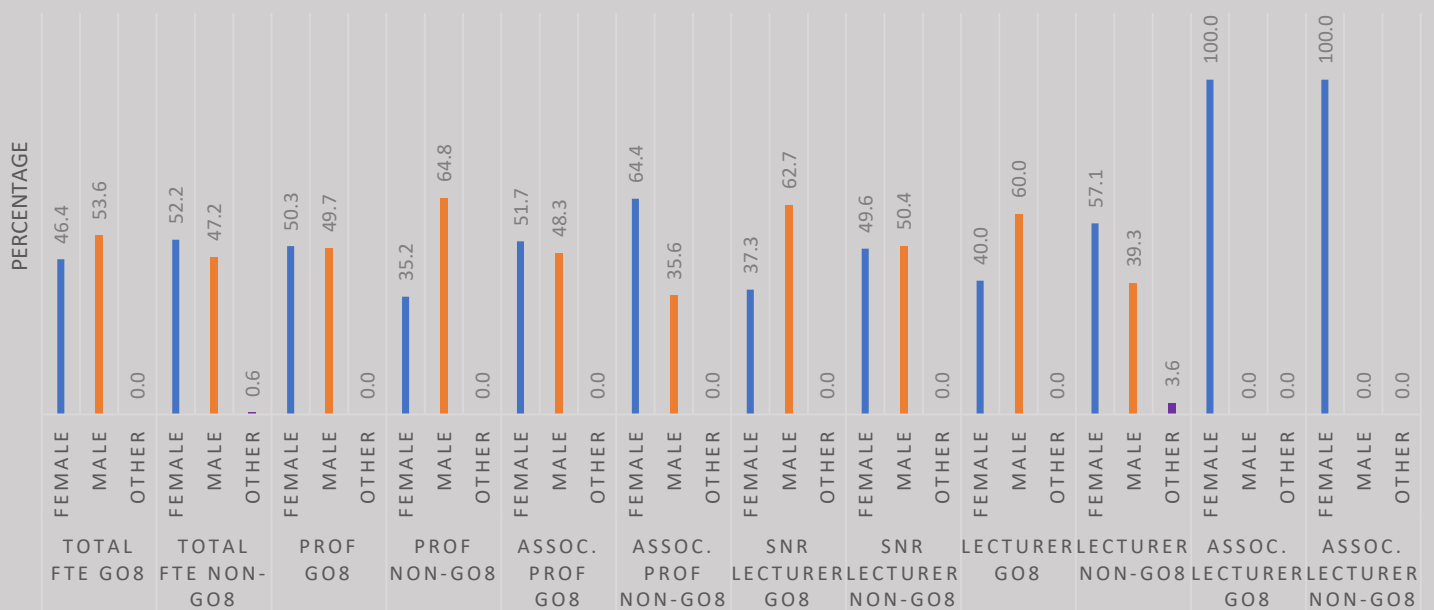


Figure 18: Australia 2022: seniority by gender (in proportional terms) and sector

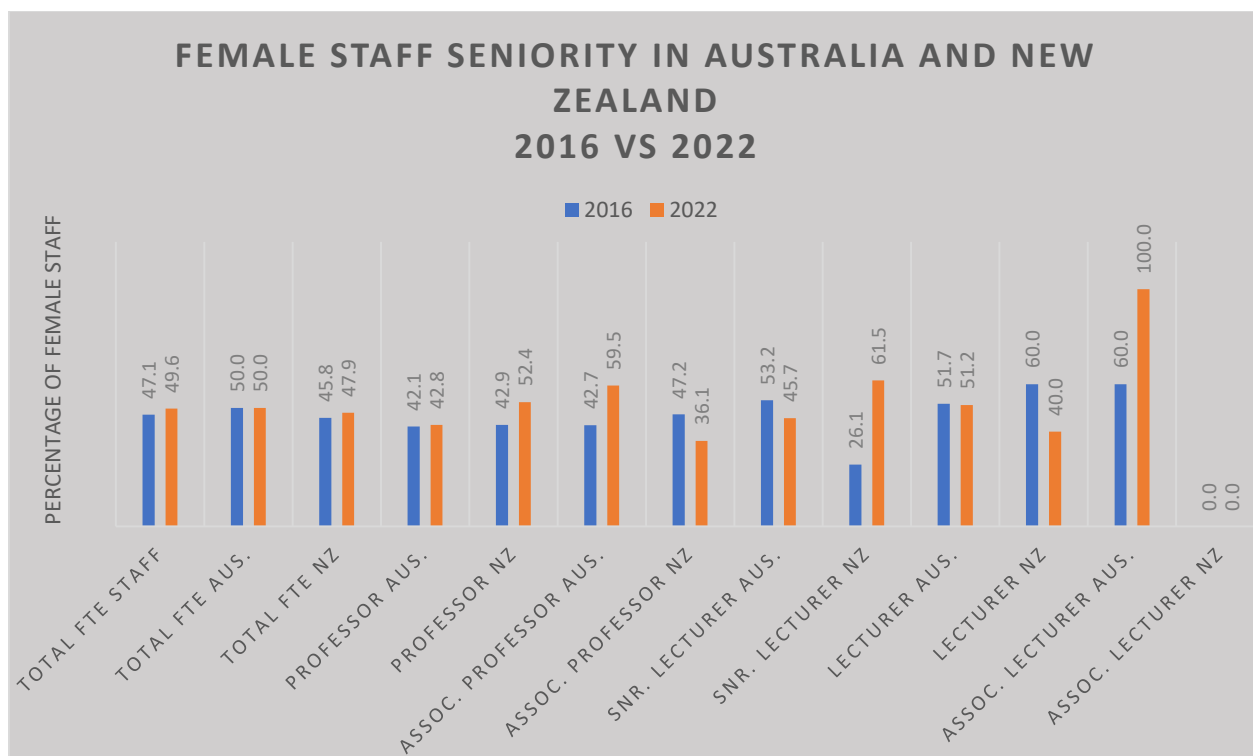


Figure 19: Australia and New Zealand, 2016 and 2022 compared: portion of women in continuing positions by seniority and country

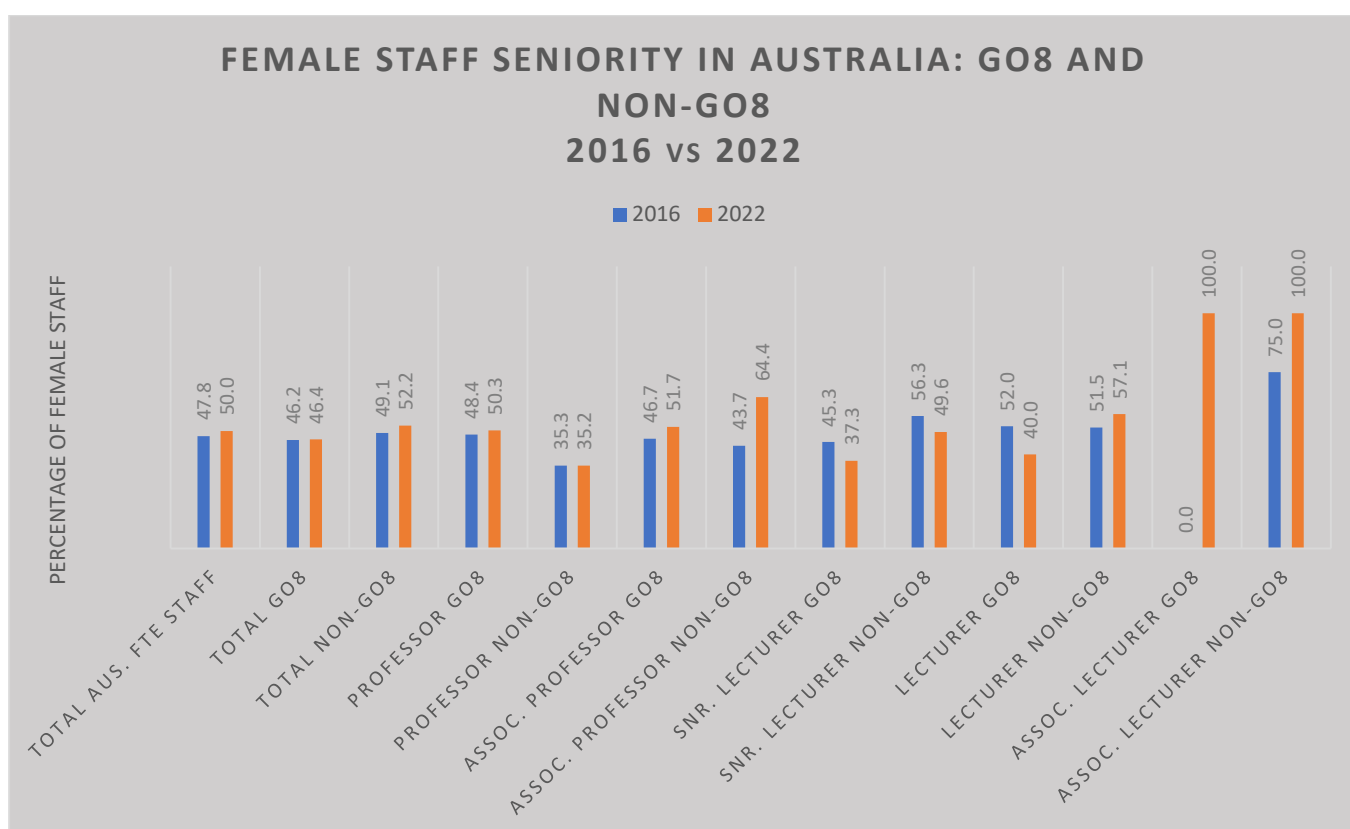


Figure 20: Australia, 2016 and 2022 compared: portion of women in continuing positions by seniority and sector

Key findings

- In terms of attaining continuing positions, women have achieved parity with men at the senior levels of the profession (i.e. professor and associate professor positions combined). Women hold 50 percent of professor and associate professor History positions (combined) in Australia and New Zealand, with a higher proportion of these being associate professors (54.9 percent). Women are under-represented at professor level in Australia (due to their fewer numbers in the non-Go8 sector) but outnumber men at this level in New Zealand.
- The numbers of men and women employed at each of the lower levels (senior lecturer and lecturer) are also reasonably even. In Australia and New Zealand, women hold 47.8 percent of senior lecturer positions and 50 percent of lecturer positions. In Australia, it is men who are more likely to hold the lower-level positions (with a combined difference of 5.3 FTE positions at lecturer and senior lecturer level), whereas it is women who are slightly more likely to hold these positions in New Zealand. The difference in the New Zealand case is only 2 FTE positions and hence statistically insignificant.
- The non-binary staff members were employed at both senior (1 associate professor in New Zealand) and junior (1 lecturer in Australia) levels. These numbers are too small to assign any significance.
- Within Australia, women very slightly outnumbered men at professor level in Go8 universities but were significantly under-represented at this level in non-Go8 universities, where they constituted just 35.2 percent of professor positions. However, there were many more women than men holding associate professor positions at non-Go8 universities (64.4 percent of all such appointments), which is a significant improvement from 2016, when women held only 20 percent of these positions. Women were also predominant at the associate professor level in Go8 universities. The higher numbers of women than men at both professor and associate professor level in Go8 universities is notable, given they only hold 46.4 percent of continuing positions in Go8 History groupings overall. It is clear that a significant number of women have been promoted (or appointed) to the upper ranks of the profession since 2016.
- There was a considerably higher proportion of women employed at senior lecturer level at non-Go8 universities than the Go8 sector (49.6 percent compared to 37.3 percent). However, in both cases there were fewer women than men employed at this level, bucking the historical trend (and prevailing view) that more females than men are clustered in the middle and lower levels of the profession.

Conclusions

The gender disparity at the more senior levels of the profession observed in the 2016 survey was not apparent in the 2022 survey results.

In 2016 women were under-represented in professorships and associate professorships. In Australia the under-representation was slightly worse than in the profession overall, whereas in New Zealand it almost exactly mirrored under-representation in the profession overall. Within Australia the disparity was most marked in non-Go8 universities where the percentages of women holding professorships and associate professorships were both noticeably lower than the percentage of women holding continuing positions in the non-Go8 sector overall. Commenting on the 2016 findings – which nevertheless showed a vast improvement in terms of gender parity compared to early surveys – we noted that the resolution of the under-representation of women in the History profession was underway.

We stated that as the majority of new positions were at the more junior level of the profession,

it is to be expected that disparity would first disappear or be resolved at these levels before the disparities at the more senior levels. There is a “pipeline” effect in evidence both in terms of women entering continuing positions from postgraduate ranks and research fellowships, and in reaching the more senior levels of the profession. As with the number of positions overall, it is a reasonable presumption that the imbalance at the higher levels of seniority will close, and possibly disappear, over the next few years.³³

Some who read our paper were sceptical and particularly critical of the view that an effective “pipeline” was in operation, but the findings from 2022 would appear to vindicate our assessment. The pipeline has certainly been in operation since 2016. With this said, we recognise that structural factors still impede women attaining the most senior positions in the profession.³⁴ These include their performance of the greater share of home duties and caring for children and family – a factor that was exacerbated by the COVID pandemic.³⁵ There is also evidence of gender bias influencing student evaluations of teaching, which are important components of appointment and promotion applications, and that women are more likely than men to undertake the under-recognised and unrewarded administrative and service roles in academic departments, which lessens the time they have to spend on research and writing for publication.³⁶ It is possible that these inequalities have lessened over time, or that universities are taking them into consideration when making appointments, awarding fellowships and assessing promotion applications, which might explain why women are now well represented at the most senior levels of the profession.

As with the gender breakdown in overall appointment numbers, the circumstances concerning gender parity and seniority in the History profession in Australia and New Zealand compare very favourably with History in the United Kingdom. A 2015 report by the Royal Historical Society found that male History professors outnumbered female History

³³ Crotty and Sendziuk, “The Numbers Game”, p. 372.

³⁴ The literature examining the factors listed in this paragraph is extensive. See, for example, Teresa Marchant and Michelle Wallace, “Sixteen Years of Change for Australian Female Academics: Progress or Segmentation?”, *Australian Universities’ Review*, vol. 55, no. 2, 2013, pp. 60–71; Carmel Diezmann and Susan Jane Grieshaber, “The Australian Story: Catalysts and Inhibitors in the Achievement of New Women Professors”, in *Proceedings of the International Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Education 2010* (Melbourne: AARE, 2010), 1–17; Glenda Strachan et al., *Women, Careers and Universities: Where to from Here*, Centre for Work, Organisation and Wellbeing, Griffith University, 2016.

³⁵ Lyn Craig and Brendan Churchill, “Dual-Earner Parent Couples’ Work and Care During COVID-19”, *Gender, Work & Organization*, vol. 28, no. S1, 2021, pp. 514–27; Kirsty Duncanson, Natasha Weir, Pavithra Siriwardhane, and Tehmina Khan, “How COVID is widening the academic gender divide”, *The Conversation*, 6 October 2020, <https://theconversation.com/how-covid-is-widening-the-academic-gender-divide-146007>, accessed 23 June 2023; Belinda M. Brucki, Tanmay Bagade, and Tazeen Majeed, “A health impact assessment of gender inequities associated with psychological distress during COVID19 in Australia’s most locked down state—Victoria”, *BMC Public Health*, vol. 23, no. 1, 2023, doi:10.1186/s12889-022-14356-6.

³⁶ Kristina M.W. Mitchell and Jonathan Martin, “Gender Bias in Student Evaluations”, *PS: Political Science & Politics*, vol. 51, no. 3, 2018, pp. 648–52; Anne Boring, “Gender Biases in Student Evaluations of Teaching”, *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 145, 2017, pp. 27–41; Lillian MacNeill, Adam Driscoll and Andrea N. Hunt, “What’s in a Name: Exposing Gender Bias in Student Ratings of Teaching”, *Innovative Higher Education*, vol. 40, no. 4, 2015, pp. 291–303.

professors by almost four to one in the United Kingdom. The situation might have changed a little since, but there would appear to be significantly greater gender disparities in History in the United Kingdom in the proportion of female academics, in access to secure employment and in seniority than there are in Australia and New Zealand.³⁷

Indigenous and Māori Staff

Some universities have established aspirational goals regarding the employment of Indigenous and Māori staff in academia, generally with the aim of matching their representation in the general community. For example, at a time when Indigenous people were thought to constitute 2.5 percent of the Australian population, the University of Adelaide set what it described as a “bold population parity target of 2% participation by 2023”.³⁸ This figure was later updated to 3 percent by 2030.³⁹ For the first time, the 2022 survey asked a question about the employment of Indigenous Australian and Māori staff in History groupings in Australia and New Zealand. The survey results indicate that History as a whole is tracking well ahead of such university targets, particularly in Australia.

Results

County	FTE positions and percentage of total staff
Australia and New Zealand combined	20 (5.3%)
New Zealand	6 (10%)
Australia	14 (4.4%)
Australia Go8	5 (4.2%)
Australia non-Go8	9 (4.6%)

Table 8: Australia and New Zealand 2022: FTE Indigenous and Māori staff and their portion of all History staff by country and sector

³⁷ Royal Historical Society, *Gender Equality and Historians in UK Higher Education: A Report by the Royal Historical Society*, Royal Historical Society, London, 2015.

³⁸ “Indigenous Employment”, The University of Adelaide, <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/indigenous/employment>; accessed 4 June 2023.

³⁹ “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy”, The University of Adelaide, <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/indigenous/employment/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-employment-strategy>; accessed 4 June 2023.

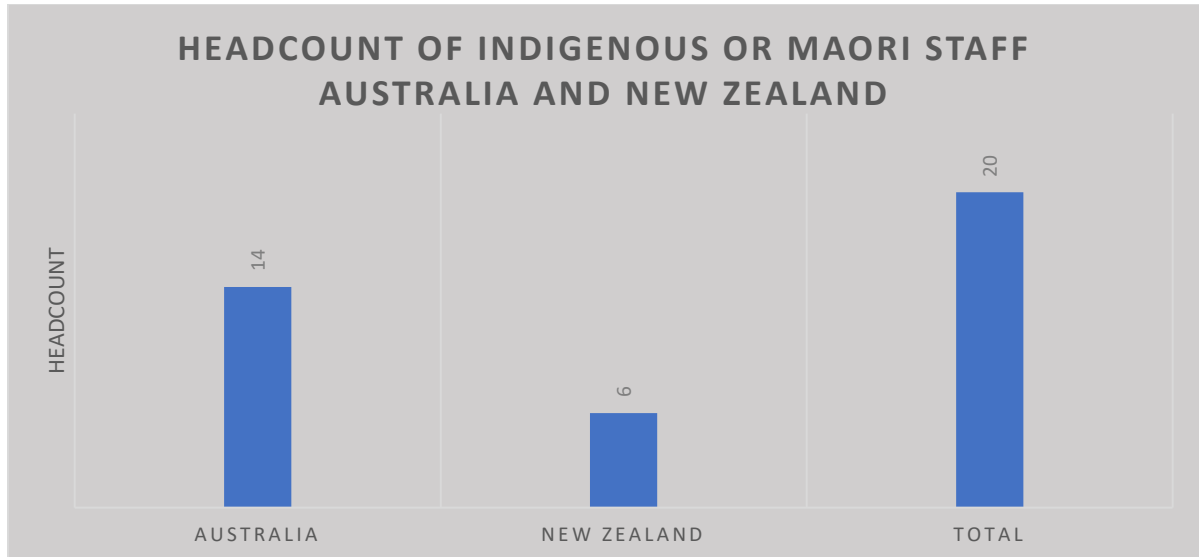


Figure 22: Australia and New Zealand 2022: FTE Indigenous or Māori staff by country

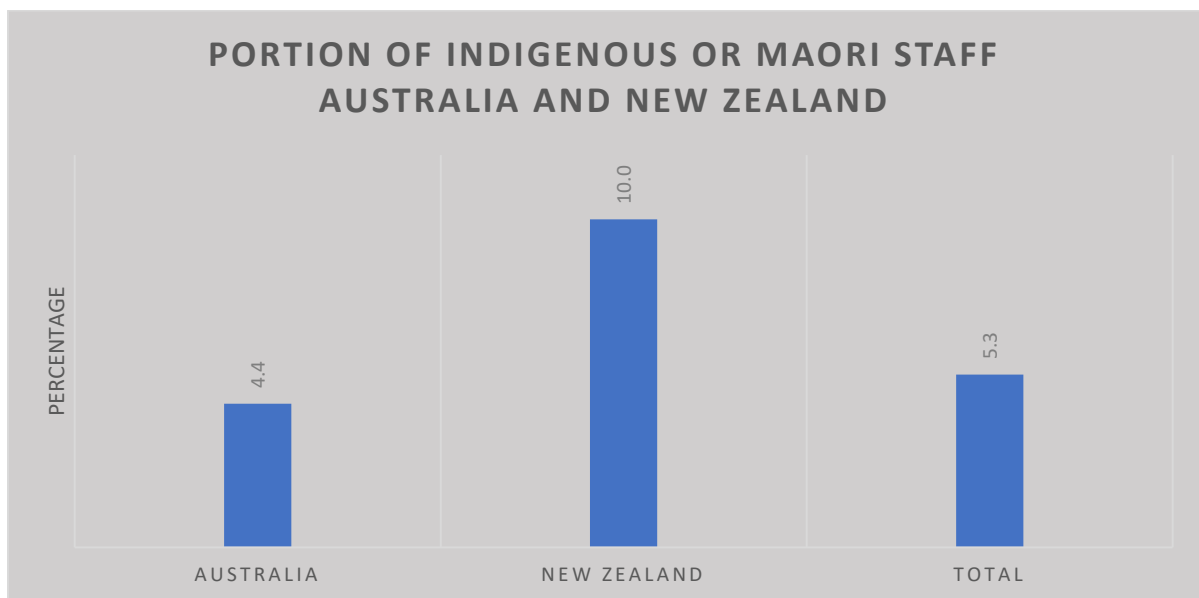


Figure 23: Australia and New Zealand 2022: Indigenous or Māori people as a portion of all staff in History by country

Key findings

- In New Zealand, 10 percent of all paid staff were Indigenous or Māori. (One of these was identified as a First Nations person originating from Australia.)
- The figure was lower for Australia, reflective of the smaller percentage of the Australian population identifying as Indigenous. Still, 4.4 percent of paid staff in History were Indigenous/First Nations or Torres Strait Islands people (with one person identified as Māori). Given the aspirational targets set by universities, History appears to be tracking

ahead of many other disciplines in terms of the employment of Indigenous and Māori staff.⁴⁰

- Within Australia there was basically no difference between the Go8 and non-Go8 sectors in terms of the employment of Indigenous people in History.

Conclusions

Given the low portion of First Nations or Torres Strait Island people in the Australian population (approximately 3.2 percent), and their historically low representation among university graduates with PhDs, there is a relatively high number of Indigenous people employed in Australian History groupings (both Go8 and non-Go8).⁴¹ New Zealand performs less well in this regard, given that Māori people constitute approximately 17 percent of the population but less than 10 percent of staff in History groupings.⁴² The aggregate number of Indigenous and Māori people employed in History is low however, limiting the statistical significance of these findings. Nevertheless, this data provides a useful benchmark by which to analyse future developments in the employment of Indigenous and Māori people in History.

Casual Staff

One of the major shifts in teaching History at universities over the past three decades has been the increasing reliance on casual staff to deliver teaching programs.⁴³ (By ‘casual staff’ we mean casual/sessional staff and those on short-term contracts of one year or less.) The employment of casual staff – generally, but not always, postgraduate students or early career researchers paid at an hourly rate – provides flexibility and cost-efficiency for university administrators, because the hours worked by casual staff can be closely calibrated to the rise and fall of student enrolments each semester. The seemingly ever-increasing casualisation of the workforce has, however, been criticised for the psychological and financial burdens it places on staff and for the potential of wage-theft to occur.⁴⁴ In the past, surveys of History staffing have struggled to capture the extent of the reliance on casual staff; most either failed to consider the issue entirely, or found it difficult to quantify the extent of labour performed by casual staff.

⁴⁰ For a comparison with university numbers and with STEM disciplines in the case of Māori academic staff, see Tara G. McAllister, Sereana Naepi, Elizabeth Wilson, Daniel Hikuroa & Leilani A. Walker, “Under-represented and Overlooked: Māori and Pasifika Scientists in Aotearoa New Zealand’s Universities and Crown-Research Institutes”, *Journal of the Royal Society of New Zealand*, vol. 5, no. 1, 2022, pp. 38-53.

⁴¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics, “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people”, <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-peoples/aboriginal-and-torres-strait-islander-people-census/latest-release>; accessed 13 October 2023.

⁴² Stats NZ, Māori Population Estimates: At 30 June 2022, <https://www.stats.govt.nz/information-releases/maori-population-estimates-at-30-june-2022>; accessed 4 June 2023.

⁴³ Robyn May, “An Investigation of the Casualisation of Academic Work in Australia”, PhD thesis, Griffith University, 2014.

⁴⁴ See Archie Thomas, Hannah Forsyth and Andrew G. Bonnell, “‘The dice are loaded’: History, Solidarity and Precarity in Australian Universities”, *History Australia*, vol. 17, no. 1, 2020, pp. 21-39; Megan Lee, Rosanne Coutts, Jann Fielden, Marie Hutchinson, Richard Lakeman, Bernice Mathisen, Dima Nasrawi and Nichole Phillips, “Occupational Stress in University Academics in Australia and New Zealand”, *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, vol. 44, no. 1, 2022, pp. 57-71; Damien Cahill, “Wage Theft and Casual Work are Built into University Business Models”, *The Conversation*, 27 October 2020, <https://theconversation.com/wage-theft-and-casual-work-are-built-into-university-business-models-147555>; accessed 24 June 2023; National Tertiary Education Union, *NTEU Wage Theft Report*, February 2023, available at https://www.nteu.au/News_Articles/National/Wage_Theft_Report.aspx.

We grappled with this problem when the designing the 2016 survey. How could we ‘count’ casual staff when it was impossible for History Heads to determine their ‘full time equivalency’, which is how all other staff were being counted and reported on? A headcount did not make sense, as one casual staff member in a History Department might be employed for 25 hours of teaching/marking per week and hence do more work than eight casual staff in another Department each being paid for three hours’ work per week. The utilisation of casual staff also varies considerably from year to year depending on leave patterns of paid staff and student enrolments (unlike the employment of continuing staff, which remains fairly stable), and hence there is less likelihood of data concerning casual staff in one year being representative of other years.

Due to these issues, and because the main purpose of the 2016 survey was to collect data to compare to previous surveys (which did not consider casual staff at all), we omitted discussion of casual staff in our report of the 2016 survey. This decision attracted criticism and the Australian Historical Association soon commissioned a separate study devoted entirely to the issue of casualisation.⁴⁵ That research produced a useful report that focused on the experience of staff in precarious work, but did not seek to devise a methodology by which the extent of casualisation in History across Australia and New Zealand could be accurately (or even suggestively) measured.

Clearly the issue of casualisation could no longer be ignored, and so in the 2022 survey we asked Heads of History groupings two questions: first, to state the number of courses coordinated by casual staff members; and second, to estimate the portion of undergraduate teaching (including course coordination, preparing for and delivering lectures and tutorials, and marking) performed by casual staff. Their estimates in terms of the second question varied considerably, ranging from none to 80 percent of teaching. The reliability of this data is questionable; Heads of History in some organisational structures can find it difficult to know exactly how many casual staff are employed in their groupings, never mind exactly how much time casual staff spend preparing classes or marking essays, or to judge the equivalency of, say, a full-time staff member writing and delivering lectures while a casual staff member does the majority of marking in a course. Nonetheless, this problem will remain a consistent factor when subsequent surveys are undertaken, and we now at least have a benchmark for charting changes or continuity in labour performed by causal staff in History groupings going forward.

Results

	Australia and NZ	Australia	New Zealand	Aust. Go8	Aust. Non-Go8
Proportion of teaching	28.4%	31.4%	8%	37.9%	29.4%
No. of courses coordinated	1.3	1.3	1.2	2.4	1

Table 9. Average proportion of overall teaching performed by casual staff in History and the average number of courses coordinated by causal staff at each institution, by country and sector

⁴⁵ Romain Fathi and Lyndon Megarrity, “You Matter: The Australian Historical Association’s Casualisation Survey”, November 2019. Available at <https://www.theaha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Casualisation-Survey-PDF-for-release.pdf>.

Key findings

- All Australian Go8 universities and most non-Go8 universities employed casual staff to teach; only five non-Go8 History groupings reported that they did not employ casual staff in 2022.
- The proportion of History teaching performed by casual staff at Australian universities ranged from zero to 80 percent. The average proportion of teaching performed by casuals at Go8 universities was 37.9 percent; the corresponding figure for non-Go8 universities was 29.4 percent.
- Casual staff were employed, on average, to coordinate at least one History course at Australian and New Zealand universities. In Australian Go8 universities, the average number of coordinated courses was 2.4. At two Go8 universities they coordinated four History courses and at another Go8 university they coordinated five.
- New Zealand History groupings were less reliant on casual labour than their Australian counterparts. Heads of History at New Zealand universities estimated that, on average, casual staff performed 8 percent of History teaching. Two of these claimed no casual staff were used, and one other university estimated the contribution of casual staff to teaching to be only 5 percent.

Conclusions

The results for our 2022 survey show that most History groupings depended on casual labour. Australian Go8 universities were particularly reliant on casual staff to teach their History programs, with Heads estimating that they performed nearly 38 percent of overall teaching. On average, casual staff coordinated 2.4 History courses at Go8 institutions, with the maximum number of courses being five at one institution. The figures for the non-Go8 sector show slightly less reliance on casual staff, although it was estimated that they still performed nearly 30 percent of all teaching. The higher rates of employment of casual labour in Go8 universities might reflect their research-intensive focus and the higher rates of success of Go8 academics in securing grant funding that pays for teaching assistance. Alternatively, or in addition, it might be a consequence of the loss of continuing positions in these institutions, which has not been matched by a commensurate reduction in student load. Students still need to be taught, and it is cheaper for universities to pay casual staff to teach them than replace departing staff with new continuing positions.

While Heads of History at Australian universities have provided reasonably high estimates of the proportion of teaching performed by casual staff, these figures are still well below the estimates of casual teaching in universities overall produced by social scientists and unions, some of which suggest that casual staff are responsible for performing approximately 50 percent of university teaching.⁴⁶ We might ponder why this is the case. Estimates are, by their nature, speculative and perhaps errors have been made on both sides. Another factor – and perhaps more likely – is that as funding for the humanities has stagnated or been cut in real terms, meaning that continuing History staff are being asked to do more of the teaching by taking additional or larger classes. Some universities have also restricted or removed study leave for academics as a cost-cutting measure, at least temporarily, meaning that more academic staff have been available to undertake the teaching. The employment of

⁴⁶ Thomas, Forsyth and Bonnell, “The dice are loaded”, p. 28; Graeme Turner and Kylie Brass, *Mapping the Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences in Australia*, Australian Academy of the Humanities, Canberra, 2014, p. 77.

casual labour is therefore less necessary. Casual staff were the greatest casualty of the COVID-induced 'rationalisation' of university operations, and all parts of the university were affected by this.⁴⁷ Professor Frank Larkins from the University of Melbourne's Centre for Study of Higher Education reports that "sector-wide casual staff FTE numbers were reduced by 30% over the two years, while continuing staff reductions were 3.4%".⁴⁸

Our findings can be coupled with those of the study conducted by Romain Fathi and Lyndon Megarrity on behalf of the AHA in 2019 to provide additional insights concerning the contribution of casual staff to teaching History. Fathi and Megarrity's survey was issued directly to casual staff (rather than completed by Heads of History) and received 153 responses. Since the authors could not calculate the total number of casuals employed in 2019 nor the total hours that they worked (nor ensure that casual staff from all universities were represented), they focused mainly on the individual experiences of respondents. Their findings regarding the average number of paid work hours that casual staff performed each week is, nonetheless, revealing. They found that 30 percent of respondents were paid for 1 to 5 hours of work, 27.5 percent for 5 to 10 hours, 20.8 percent for 10 to 20 hours, 8.5 percent for 20 to 30 hours, 3.3 percent for 30 to 38 hours, 9.2 percent for 38 hours (full time) and 0.7 percent for over 38 hours. Overall, 21.7 percent of respondents were paid for more than 20 hours of work per week, while the majority of them (57.5 percent) were paid for up to 10 hours of work per week.⁴⁹ Worryingly, 86.9 percent of respondents declared that they were required to work "invisible" unpaid extra hours in order to complete the tasks they were assigned. As the authors of the report note, "This figure is alarming because it highlights the amount of unpaid and unrecognised labour that goes into casual work in the History discipline in Australia. This is one of the most recurrent observations made by this survey's participants."⁵⁰

Honorary Staffing

Honorary staffing is usually a secondary concern for History groupings, but is nonetheless of some import. Honorary staff typically concentrate on research, and their research outputs can contribute significantly to a discipline or academic unit's research productivity, quality and impact. Honorary staff can also make important contributions to the supervision of research theses and to the mentoring of junior staff, and may also contribute to undergraduate teaching. The costs imposed upon academic units is generally small, and most of the benefits for honorary staff – such as email, internet and library access, and shared office space – are provided centrally rather than by the disciplinary grouping or the academic unit.

⁴⁷ Jess Harris, Kathleen Smithers and Nerida Spina, "More than 70% of academics at some universities are casuals. They're losing work and are cut out of JobKeeper", *The Conversation*, 15 May 2020, <https://theconversation.com/more-than-70-of-academics-at-some-universities-are-casuals-theyre-losing-work-and-are-cut-out-of-jobkeeper-137778>; accessed 24 June 2023.

⁴⁸ Frank Larkins, "Australian University Staff Job Losses Exceed Pandemic Financial Outcomes", 9 May 2022, The University of Melbourne, <https://melbourne-cshe.unimelb.edu.au/publications/fellow-voices/australian-university-staff-job-losses-exceed-pandemic-financial-outcomes>, accessed 24 June 2023.

⁴⁹ Romain Fathi and Lyndon Megarrity, "You Matter: The Australian Historical Association's Casualisation Survey", November 2019, p. 10. Available at <https://www.theaha.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Casualisation-Survey-PDF-for-release.pdf>.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

2022 Results

	Female	Male	Non-Binary/Other	Total
Australia and New Zealand	159 (48.8%)	167 (51.2%)	0 (0%)	326
Australia	146 (48.2%)	157 (51.8%)	0 (0%)	303
New Zealand	13 (56.5%)	10 (43.5%)	0 (0%)	23
Australia: Go8	80 (46.5%)	92 (53.5%)	0 (0%)	172
Australia: non-Go8	66 (50.4%)	65 (49.6%)	0 (0%)	131

Table 10: Australia and New Zealand 2022: honorary appointments by country, sector and gender

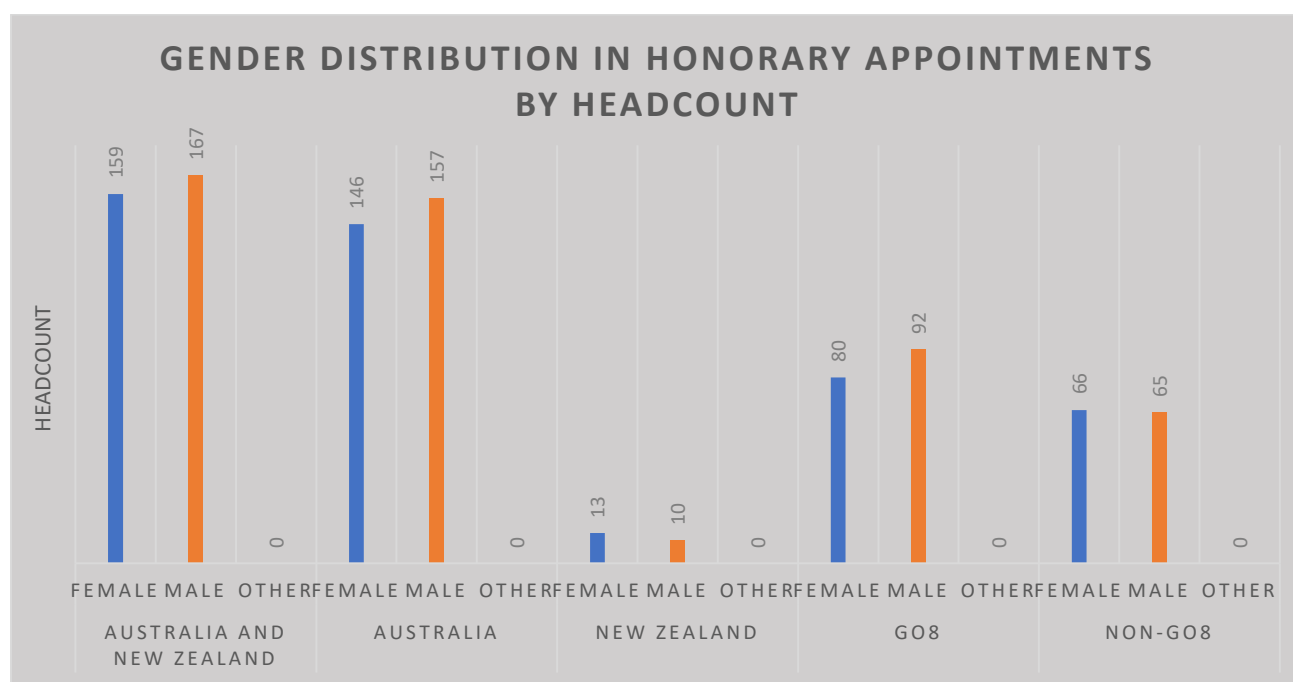


Figure 24: Australia and New Zealand 2022: honorary appointments (headcount) by country, sector and gender

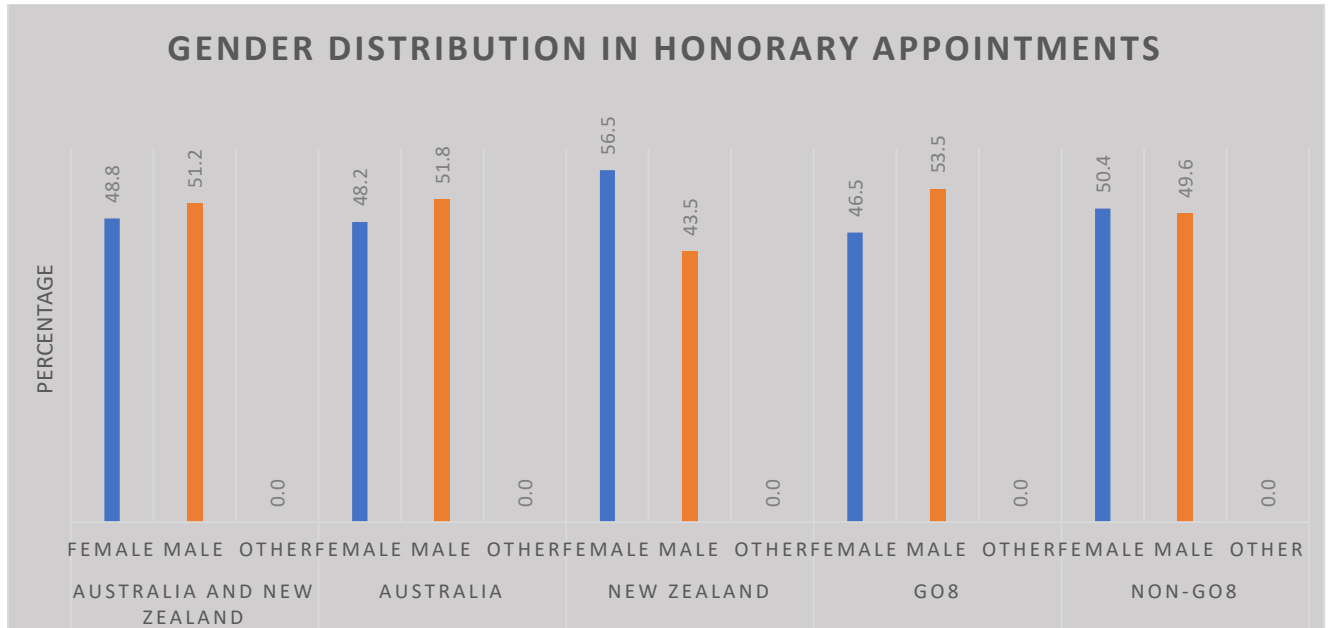


Figure 25: Australia and New Zealand 2022: gender distribution (in proportional terms) of honorary appointments by country and sector

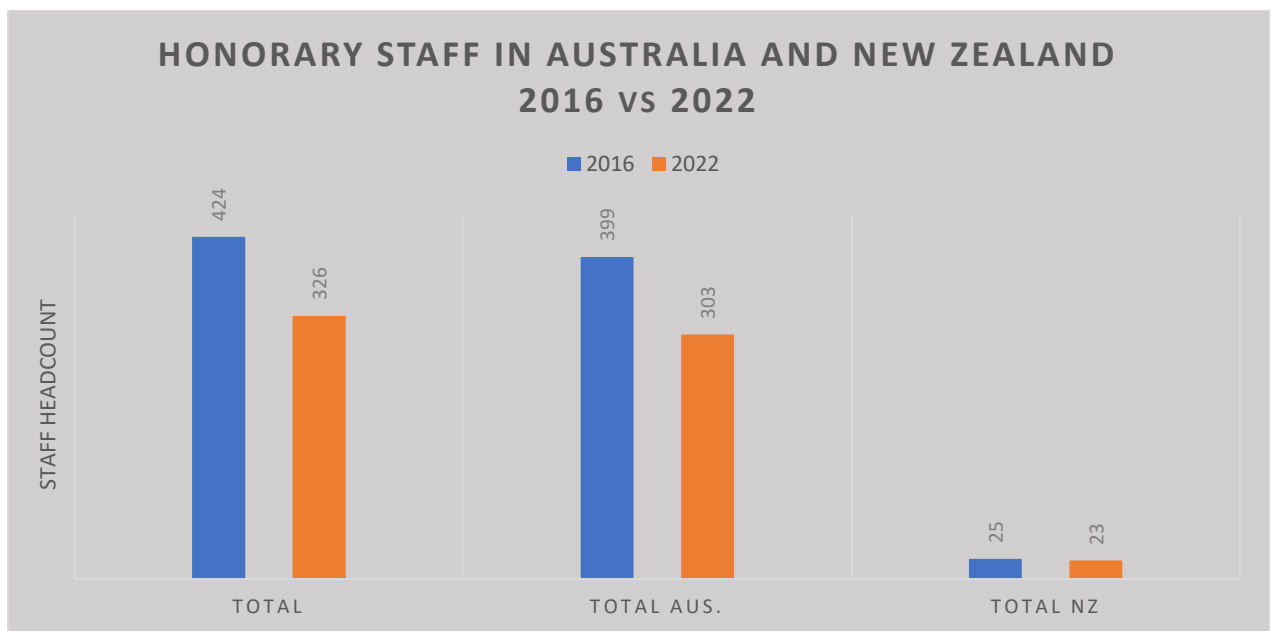


Figure 26: Australia and New Zealand, 2016 and 2022 compared: honorary appointments (headcount) by country

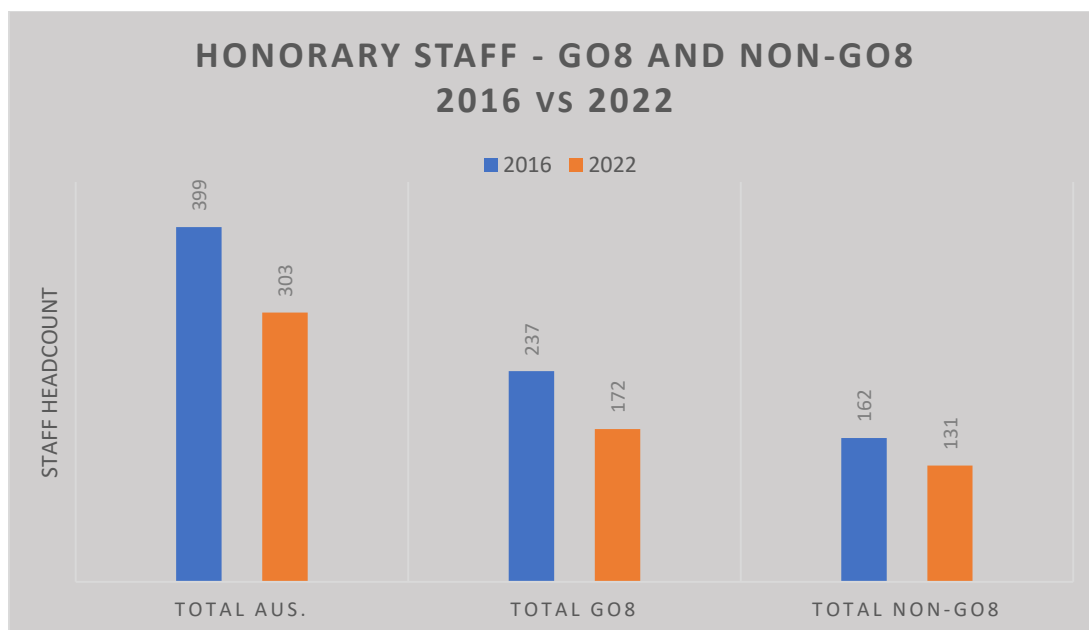


Figure 27: Australia, 2016 and 2022 compared: honorary appointments (headcount) by sector

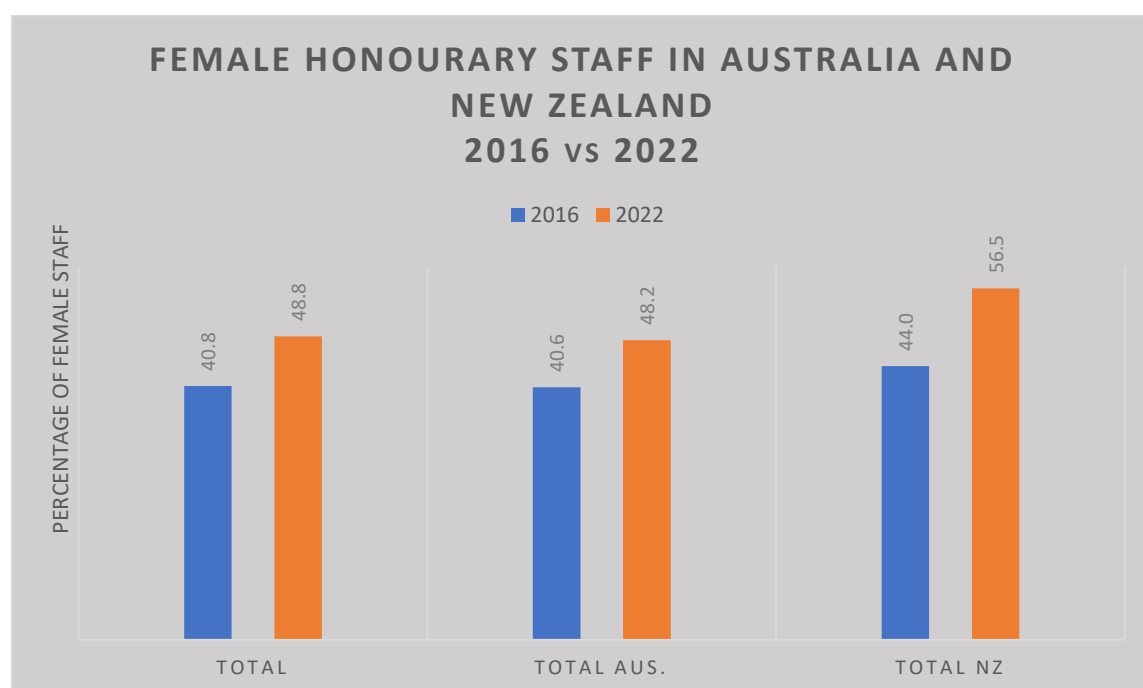


Figure 28: Australia and New Zealand, 2016 and 2022 compared: female proportion of all honorary appointments by country

Key findings

- Honorary staff were widely engaged in Australia and New Zealand in 2022.
- Honorary staff were concentrated in Australia, with 303 honorary staff (compared to 318.7 FTE paid staff) whereas there were just 23 in New Zealand (compared to 59.8 FTE paid staff).
- There has been a significant drop in the number of honorary staff in Australia, particularly in the Go8 sector.

- Honorary staff were concentrated in the Go8 sector in Australia. Some 56.8 percent of Australian honorary staff were attached to Go8 universities, as opposed to 43.2 percent in the non-Go8 sector. The disparity is significant, especially since there are far fewer paid staff at Go8 universities than in the non-Go8 sector (124 FTE compared to 194.7 FTE).
- The gender balance among honorary staff was reasonably consistent across the two countries and the Go8 and non-Go8 sectors in Australia. Overall, 51.2 percent of honorary staff were male, 48.8 percent female. New Zealand is the outlier, where women hold 56.5 percent of honorary positions.
- The gender mix is in a much more balanced position compared to 2016, when women constituted only 40.6 percent of honorary appointments in Australia and 44 percent of such appointments in New Zealand.


Conclusions

Honorary staff were widely employed by History groupings, particularly in Australia, and even more so in the Go8 sector. The greater proportional employment of honorary staff in Australia is probably attributable, in part at least, to their research output contributing towards publication income until recently, and latterly to research quality assessment exercises. The concentration in Go8 History groupings is likely due to a number of factors, including the desire on the part of honorary staff to be associated with more prestigious institutions, the higher quality of research infrastructure such as library collections, and stronger research cultures.

Honorary staff were widely employed by History groupings, particularly in Australia, and even more so

As a comparison with the 2016 data shows, there has been a substantial decline in the overall number of honorary positions in Australia and New Zealand (424 down to 326). This fall is evident across both countries (although less so in New Zealand) and the Go8 and non-Go8 sectors. This might partly be the result of Heads of History understating the number of Honorary staff in their groupings, but University budgets have tightened considerably in recent years and resources are being stretched thin, which might account for universities being less keen to make or renew honorary appointments. Research quality assessment exercises, particularly the ERA (Excellence in Research for Australia), are another possibly contributing factor. In the ERA, History groupings are obliged to submit research outputs for evaluation, with those published in the 'highest ranked' journals and with the most esteemed publishers being viewed most favourably. Honorary staff might be less likely to engage such publishers, as they do not seek promotion (and hence do not need such publications as evidence of their merit) and are not beholden to university research strategies. Having such honorary staff 'on the books' can thus diminish rather than enhance the research profile and reputation of a History grouping. COVID restrictions and lockdowns also reduced honorary staff members' engagement with campuses and colleagues, making honorary appointments less appealing.

In 2022 there was a slight gender disparity among honorary staff (167 men compared to 159 women), although significantly less than the case in 2016. In New Zealand and the Australian non-Go8 sector, women holding honorary positions slightly out-number men. The imbalance in favour of men in the Go8 universities is most likely due to a "legacy" effect whereby the greater number of male historians in the past, particularly at senior levels, has



resulted in a significantly larger pool of retired male academic historians, many of whom have continued their research after ceasing paid employment and have sought honorary appointments to support their continued activity.

STUDENT MIX AND STAFF-STUDENT RATIOS

Student Load

In 1996 Norman Etherington lamented that AHA surveys had revealed a major deterioration in staff-student ratios, from 1:12.3 in 1970 to 1:17.8 in 1995.⁵¹ It is, however, unclear on what basis these numbers were calculated. Such calculations are often inclusive of research-only or research-focussed staff which tends to give a false impression as this overstates the teaching resources that are available for a disciplinary grouping to manage its teaching program.

Aware of this problem, in 2016 and 2022 we calculated staff-student ratios on the basis of the total student load (EFTSL), expressed and calculated as equivalent full-time students and inclusive of honours, postgraduate coursework and HDR students, divided by the number of staff on continuing appointments and those on fixed-term contracts of more than one year. We have excluded from the calculation staff who were on postdoctoral or other research-focussed fellowships unless they were expected to return to continuing teaching positions. This is still an imperfect method, but we believe that it gives a better measure of the staff available to meet teaching and supervision requirements.

In completing the survey for 2022, Heads of History often relied on Faculty offices to supply student load data, and those Faculty offices were not always obliging. There was also some confusion as to whether students enrolled in non-History coded courses taught by historians should count (and what constituted a 'History' course), and whether a 'headcount' (as opposed to an EFTSL count) would suffice. We feel that a number of universities understated the number of postgraduates that they teach or supervise, and, when pressed, Graduate Schools and Faculty offices were sometimes unable to supply exact figures either. Nevertheless, these problems were also apparent in the 2016 iteration of the survey, and hence in comparing the results from the two surveys we are at least comparing 'like' with 'like'. Every endeavour was made to secure the best quality data; some Heads and Faculty offices were contacted four or five times as we sought to query or clarify data that had been supplied or to obtain data that was missing. Where data regarding student load was not supplied, we excluded those history groupings from our staff-student ratio calculations altogether.

2022 Results

	EFTSL Undergrad	EFTSL Hons	EFTSL PGC	EFTSL HDR	EFTSL total	Number of staff FTE (Continuing & fixed-term)	Staff-student ratio
Australia & New Zealand	5188.1 (85.7%)	273 (4.5%)	127 (2.1%)	464.9 (7.7%)	6052.9	337.6	17.9

⁵¹ Etherington, "The Historical Profession in Our Universities", p. 30.

New Zealand	933.7 (84.7%)	58.6 (5.3%)	22.1 (2%)	87.3 (7.9%)	1101.7	54.8	20.1
Australia	4254.4 (85.9%)	214.4 (4.3%)	104.9 (2.1%)	377.6 (7.6%)	4951.2	282.8	17.5
Go8	1888.5 (84.8%)	98.6 (4.4%)	50 (2.2%)	190 (8.5%)	2227.1	117.2	19
Non-Go8	2365.9 (86.8%)	115.8 (4.2%)	54.9 (2%)	187.6 (6.9%)	2724.1	165.6	16.4

Table 11: Australia and New Zealand, 2022: Student load (EFTSL) and staff/student load ratios by country and sector

2016 Results

	EFTSL Undergrad	EFTSL Hons	EFTSL PGC	EFTSL HDR	EFTSL total	Number of staff FTE (Continuing & fixed-term)	Staff-student ratio
Australia & New Zealand	6204.48	320.24 5	262.49	856.68	7643.88	369.65	20.68
New Zealand	1055.7	87.4	0	82.25	1225.36	61.2	20.02
Australia	5148.78	232.82	262.49	774.42	6418.52	308.45	20.81
Go8	2199.14	140.45	148.86	376.62	2865.06	131.2	21.84
Non-Go8	2949.64	92.38	113.63	397.80	3553.46	177.25	20.05

Table 12. Australia and New Zealand, 2016 (for comparative purposes): Student load (EFTSL) and staff/student load ratios by country and sector

Key findings

- Student load in all categories has dropped considerably since 2016. Total EFTSL across Australia and New Zealand in 2022 was 6052.9, a fall of 20.8 percent on the 2016 figure. The decline was much more apparent in Australia (4951.2 EFTSL in 2022 – a 22.9 percent reduction) than New Zealand (1101.7 EFTSL in 2022 – 10.1 percent reduction).
- The decline in EFTSL was noticeable across all student categories – undergraduate, honours, postgraduate coursework, and higher degree by research (HDR). For Australia and New Zealand combined, undergraduate EFTSL fell by 16.4 percent; honours EFTSL by 14.8 percent, and HDR load by 45.7 percent. Most affected was postgraduate coursework EFTSL, which declined by 51.7 percent. Again, the decreases were much more pronounced in Australia than New Zealand.
- The only category in which an increase in student load was recorded was in honours in the non-Go8 sector, which increased from 92.4 EFTSL in 2016 to 115.8 EFTSL in 2022. The decline in honours EFTSL at Go8 universities outweighed this gain

however. Honours EFTSL at Go8 universities dropped from 140.4 in 2016 to 98.6 in 2022 (a decline of 29.8 percent).

- Undergraduate student enrolments (excluding Honours year students) constitute the vast majority of student load – 85.7 percent of load across the sector. Undergraduate enrolments *as a proportion of total student load* thus increased by 4.5 percent between 2016 and 2022.
- In 2022, there was very little variation between Australia, New Zealand, and the Go8 and non-Go8 sectors in terms of the student load distribution. For each category – undergraduate, honours, postgraduate coursework, and HDR – there is only about 1 percent difference between the countries and sectors. This represents a considerable difference from 2016, when, for example, the undergraduate proportion of total student load in New Zealand was 86.2 percent, as against 80.2 percent in Australia. In 2016, there was also a marked difference within Australia between Go8 universities (where undergraduate load accounted for 76.8 percent of the overall load in History) and non-Go8 universities (where undergraduates accounted for 83 percent of overall load).
- Within Australia, Go8 universities have a higher proportion of load in each of the non-undergraduate categories than non-Go8 universities, although the aggregate EFTSL at honours and postgraduate coursework level is lower in the Go8 sector.
- The staff-student ratio for Australia and New Zealand combined in 2022 was 1:17.9 EFTSL (a considerable reduction from the 2016 ratio of 1:20.7 EFTSL).
- There was a difference across national boundaries, with the staff-student ratio in New Zealand at 1:20.1 EFTSL, being less favourable than that in Australia, at 1:17.5 EFTSL. The New Zealand staff-student ratio has not changed since 2016, whereas the Australian figure declined from 1:20.8 to 1:17.5.
- History groupings in non-Go8 universities in Australia have a more favourable staff-student ratio of 1:16.4 EFTSL than those in Go8 universities, where the staff-student ratio is 1:19 EFTSL.

Conclusions

Student load has fallen in all categories (except in honours in the Australian non-Go8 sector), and by a considerable amount. The decline has been less apparent in New Zealand (a reduction of 10.1 percent on 2016 figures), where the staff-student ratio remains the same that it was in 2016. In Australia, despite the fall in the number of History staff outlined elsewhere in this report, staff-student ratios have become more favourable since 2022. This is because student load has declined – especially in the postgraduate sectors – more rapidly than staffing numbers. The staff-student ratio is less favourable in Australian Go8 universities than in the non-Go8 sector, although their greater number of honorary staff and higher rates of success in obtaining ARC grant and other external research income gives them greater ability to supplement their teaching resources. Indeed, this is reflected in the greater (average) number of courses being coordinated by casual staff in Go8 History groupings and their greater utilisation of casual labour compared to History groupings in the non-Go8 sector. It should be kept in mind that the overall staff-student ratios reported here hide some wide variations between individual History groupings (which due to privacy considerations cannot be reported).

We received data from a slightly higher number of Australian universities in 2016, and this might partly account for the lower figures returned in 2022. For example, we did not receive student load data from the History grouping at Western Sydney University, which employs

more than ten historians and offers a sizeable number of History coded courses. The significance of such omissions should not be overstated, however. The same number of Go8 History groupings were surveyed in 2016 and 2022, and yet overall student load in that sector still fell by 22.3 percent. The 2022 staff-student ratios (lower than in 2016) were also unaffected by the omission of student data from some universities because their staff were excluded from this calculation. The main reason that we did not receive EFTSL data from some History groupings is that they employ so few historians and do not offer a History major or minor as part of a degree. Quite simply, there was very little for them to report.


Our findings will undoubtedly alarm History groupings and university administrations alike. Student load in honours, postgraduate coursework and higher degrees by research collapsed between 2016 and 2022, and undergraduate student numbers significantly declined as well. Sector-wide anecdotal evidence (and certainly evidence from the authors' own universities) indicates the position is even worse in 2023. Universities derive most of their income from student enrolments, and their reduction affects the funding of academic departments. Despite new positions being needed to promote renewal and as replacement for retiring senior academics, it is extremely difficult for Heads of History to make cases for new staff in this environment.

The severe disruptions to university operations and students' lives occasioned by the COVID pandemic has clearly had an impact on student enrolment. History staff were unable to offer face-to-face classes, some courses were cut and some staff made redundant, and campuses became virtual ghost towns. It is not surprising that students might decide to switch from, or delayed enrolling in, History programs. By early 2022 – the year for which data was collected – state and national borders were opened, encouraging young people to pause or delay their university studies in order to undertake the travel that had been denied them since March 2020. Some took 'gap' years that had been planned but postponed. The job market was also flourishing and paid work beckoned. These factors were more likely to affect honours and postgraduate student enrolments than undergraduate enrolments, and, indeed, these were the categories in which the most significant EFTSL reductions occurred.

It is also likely that the Commonwealth Government imposed changes to student fees outlined at the start of this report has had an impact on student enrolments. In 2020 parliament passed legislation that exorbitantly increased the price of Arts and Humanities degrees. The Commonwealth Education Minister surmised that this would benefit the Australian economy by incentivising students to study STEM subjects such as Engineering and Science, as well as Education, whilst simultaneously deterring students from pursuing studies in fields considered less productive or less lucrative, namely the Humanities and Arts. The average Bachelor of Arts student studying History would now pay \$14,500 per annum, a 113 percent increase from the previous \$6,804.⁵² The fee hike came into effect in 2021 and impacted students who commenced university studies in or after that year.

We might also speculate about the impact on student enrolment occasioned by the reduction of funding for History groupings, declining staff numbers and relatively high staff-student ratios, which have been experienced for some time. The funding and staffing circumstances

⁵² Australian National University and Deloitte, *University course costs and funding*, 2020, cited in ABC News, <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-06-20/study-arts-and-humanities-government-fees-tertiary-education/12374124>, accessed 9 August 2023.



have resulted in the 'rationalisation' of History courses (diminishing student choice), the excision of some tutorials from the teaching program, and a tremendous increase in class sizes. It has meant that harried academics have less time to spend attending to the needs of individual students or updating their teaching materials or designing new and attractive courses and assessment tasks. The student experience has inevitably suffered and has perhaps led to students disengaging from History.

CONCLUSION

	EFTSL 2016	EFTSL 2022	Change	ALL STAFF 2016	ALL STAFF 2022	Change
Australia & New Zealand	7643.88	6052.9	-20.8%	409.25	378.4	-7.5%
New Zealand	1225.36	1101.7	-10.1%	62.7	59.7	-4.8%
Australia	6418.52	4951.2	-22.9%	346.55	318.7	-8%
Go8	2865.06	2227.1	-22.4%	156.3	124	-20.7%
Non-Go8	3553.46	2724.1	-23.3%	190.25	194.7	+2.3%

Table 13. Australia and New Zealand: data summary and change 2016 - 2022

This survey was implemented in 2016 to measure and track the progress of the discipline through regular reiterations. As stated above, the repetition of the survey in 2022 was designed in part to measure the impact of COVID, changes to undergraduate fees, as well as aiding in tracking the longer-term fortunes of the discipline.

There are some pleasing aspects to the survey results. In particular, the gender gap in overall appointment numbers has disappeared, and the gender gap at senior levels of the discipline has closed markedly, almost to the point of non-existence.

But the good news is in the detail; as the above table highlights, the overall fortunes of our discipline in the period between 2016 and 2022, as measured by staff and student numbers, have taken a sharp turn for the worse. Perhaps most alarming is the decline in student numbers. In this regard New Zealand has fared poorly with a drop of just over 10 percent in overall student load. The Australian situation, perhaps due to the added impact of the fee changes brought in by the Job-ready Graduates Package of 2020, is extremely concerning. A drop of 22.9 percent between 2016 and 2022 means that we have lost close to a quarter of our student load in just six years.

Staff numbers are not much more encouraging. There has been an overall decline of 7.5 percent, with a particularly marked decline in the Australian Go8 sector where staff numbers have dropped by about a fifth. Notably, the staffing decline in both Australia and New Zealand is *less* than the decline in student numbers. The prospects for a turnaround in staffing numbers in a context of declining student numbers appear to be low.

The overall data, we suggest, points to a discipline in considerable distress.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: The Survey Form

Australian Historical Association

History Staffing Survey 2022:

Human Resources as at end 2022

NB – in all your responses below, please include only staff in the History disciplinary grouping. Please do not include, for example, Ancient History staff members in a separate disciplinary grouping, or historians working in other academic formations within your institution.

Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) academic staff employed on a continuing basis (e.g., count two staff on 0.5 appointments as 1 FTE academic staff member). Exclude Postdoctoral Fellows, but include all with continuing positions even if they are on fellowships such as Future Fellowships or DECRA's. Please include gender breakdown.

	Male	Female	Non-binary/other
Continuing FTE staff			

Number of full-time equivalent academic staff employed on contracts between one and three years (e.g., count two staff on 0.5 appointments as 1 FTE academic staff member).

	Male	Female	Non-binary/other
1-3 year EFT contract staff			

Number of ARC or other Postdoctoral Fellows (*excluding* those with ongoing positions, such as staff who are on ARC Future Fellowships but who will return to continuing positions once the fellowship is completed). Please include gender breakdown.

	Male	Female	Non-binary/other
ARC or other Postdoctoral Fellows			

Breakdown of seniority and gender (continuing academic staff only – exclude Postdoctoral Fellows, but include all with continuing positions even if they are on fellowships such as Future Fellowships or DECRA's).

	Male	Female	Non-binary/other
Level E (Professor)			
Level D (Assoc. Professor)			

Level C (Senior Lecturer)			
Level B (Lecturer)			
Level A (Associate Lecturer)			

Number of honorary / adjunct staff. Please include gender breakdown.

	Male	Female	Non-binary/other
Honorary / adjunct staff			

Casual/Sessional Staff

Approximately what percentage of your disciplinary group's overall undergraduate teaching load was undertaken by casual, sessional or short-term (less than one year) contract staff? Please consider face to face teaching, marking and course co-ordination in making your estimation.

How many courses did you offer which were *co-ordinated* by casual, sessional or short-term (less than one year) contract staff?

New Staff

How many ARC or other postdoctoral fellows have you appointed in 2022? Please provide details of gender and seniority.

How many new staff have you employed in 2022 on contracts of 1-3 years? Please provide details of term of appointment, gender, and seniority.

How many new staff have you employed in 2022 on continuing appointments? Please provide details of gender and seniority.

First Nations Staff

How many of your staff identify as Indigenous/First Nation or Torres Strait Islander?

How many of your staff identify as Māori?

Student Load

Please provide the student EFT student load (EFTSL) for the following categories. Please provide the EFT student load for all of 2022 rather than the student "head count". If you do not have the EFTSL data at hand, please request it from your Faculty office.

Undergraduate:

Honours:

Postgraduate Coursework:

Research Higher Degrees (M.Phil, PhD – exclude those who are "out of load" or "out of RTS" – that is, Research Higher Degree students who remain enrolled despite having exceeded the period for which they are funded:

Appendix B: Participating Institutions

Note that for the calculation of some results the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) in Canberra was treated as a separate body from the University of New South Wales, and the two campuses of the University of Notre Dame where History courses are offered – Fremantle and Sydney – were treated as separate bodies. This is because the campuses are geographically distant from each other and run distinct History programs. Note also that some institutions included in the 2016 survey no longer offer History programs or have History groupings, and that in rare instances we used information from university webpages where responses were not provided by Heads.

Group of Eight

Australian National University
Monash University
The University of Adelaide
The University of Melbourne
The University of New South Wales
The University of Queensland
The University of Sydney
The University of Western Australia

Non-Go8

Australian Catholic University
Avondale College
Charles Darwin University
Charles Sturt University
Curtin University
Deakin University
Edith Cowan University
Federation University
Flinders University
Griffith University
James Cook University
La Trobe University
Macquarie University
Murdoch University
Queensland University of Technology
Southern Cross University
Swinburne University
The University of Canberra
The University of New England
The University of Newcastle
The University of Notre Dame
The University of South Australia
The University of Southern Queensland
The University of the Sunshine Coast
The University of Tasmania
The University of Wollongong



University of Technology Sydney
Victoria University
Western Sydney University

New Zealand

Massey University
The University of Auckland
The University of Canterbury
The University of Otago
Victoria University of Wellington