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The Desired Employer Traits of Prospective and Early Career Business Academic Staff in Australia

Daniel Thomas Abell

Submitted in total fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

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LH Martin Institute

Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education

Melbourne Graduate School of Education

The University of Melbourne

Abstract

Attracting talent is an increasing concern for Australia's universities, particularly given the ageing academic workforce, increase in student enrolments, and increased local and global competition. This research commences with the premise that location may play a crucial role in attraction, and that regional universities may face significant challenges in attracting talent. This may be especially the case for business schools that find themselves in a particularly competitive market. Using human resource management theory regarding organisational attraction, along with employer branding theory, this research investigates two key research questions:

- What are the desired employer traits of prospective and early career business academics in Australia?
- What can Australian regional universities do to enhance their attractiveness to prospective and early career business academics?

Using an exploratory sequential mixed methods approach, within a pragmatic, realistic philosophy, utilising adaptive theory, and the researcher's insider perspective, the findings of this research contributed to university employer branding theory by identifying nine key employer traits that universities need to pursue to enhance their employer brand for prospective and early career academic staff:

- Job allows for work/life balance
- Job allows for autonomy
- Secure/permanent/tenured employment
- Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development
- Expert colleagues to learn from/work with
- Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors
- Performance / support / opportunity in research
- Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department

For regional universities seeking to enhance their attractiveness, the desired employer traits are consistent, though respondent answers to the question of what would improve their attractiveness suggest that these organisations should endeavour to enhance the reputation/status/rank of the university, and consider the provision of higher salaries. The results are analysed for any variance in segmentations that would allow targeted employer branding,

and discussed in context with other studies. Implications for practice are then discussed, with recommendations that regional university schools of business and law:

- Develop and invest in a differentiated employer brand;
- Examine the configuration of academic work; and
- Endeavour to build a regional high-performance learning organisation.

Ultimately, the thesis tells us that regional universities face significant challenges in the attraction of academic staff. The convergence of desired employer traits for attraction to both regional and other universities suggest that differentiation is necessary in order to be attractive. It contributes to the theoretical frameworks used by reinforcing the value of work/life balance; emphasising that academics desire autonomy and job security; providing evidence of the importance that academics place on investment in their career growth, promotion and professional development; highlighting that academics value learning from and working with expert colleagues; having the support and opportunity to undertake research; and the importance placed on the reputation, status and rank of their discipline, school or department. Opportunities for future research include a longitudinal analysis of the respondents to test for changes in the importance of employer traits over time working in the vocation, a study of attraction to universities for other disciplines and/or a study of attraction to regional universities for academics in other countries. It would also be valuable to further investigate employer branding within the Australian higher education context from the organisation's perspective, through research with human resource management professionals and leaders across universities.

Declaration

This is to certify that:

- the thesis comprises only my original work towards the PhD except where indicated in the Preface,
- due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,
- the thesis is fewer than 100 000 words in length, exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies and appendices.

Daniel Thomas Abell

Acknowledgements

Completing a thesis has long been an aspiration of mine. Now that it's done – I realise I need to start making easier goals for myself! The years in which I have undertaken my thesis have, to say the least, been eventful: I welcomed my daughter Mackenzie into the world; married my long-term partner, Tammy; battled cancer; and shifted from working for Central Queensland University to the University of the Sunshine Coast. I am very proud of completing this thesis and am pleased to have the opportunity to thank several people who have helped realise this dream.

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List of Acronyms

AACSB	Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
AHRI	Australian Human Resources Institute
AMBA	Association of MBAs
AMI	Australian Marketing Institute
ANOVA	One-way analysis of variance
API	Australian Property Institute
AT	Adaptive Theory
ATN	Australian Technology Network
CAE	Colleges of Advanced Education
CAP	Changing Academic Profession
CBD	Central Business District
CEMS	Global Alliance in Management Education
CIAE	Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education
EQUIS	European Foundation for Management Development Quality Improvement System
ERA	Excellence in Research Australia
FPAA	Financial Planning Association of Australia
FTE	Full Time Equivalent
GMAA	Graduate Management Association of Australia
Go8	Group of Eight
HRM	Human Resource Management
IRU	Innovative Research Universities
MANOVA	Multivariate analysis of variance
MBA	Master of Business Administration
NTEU	National Tertiary Education Union
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
QILT	Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching
QIT	Queensland Institute of Technology
QS	Quacquarelli Symonds
RBV	Resource Based View

RUN	Regional Universities Network
SAGE	Science in Australia Gender Equity
TAFE	Technical and Further Education
TEQSA	Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency
THE	Times Higher Education
WGEA	Workplace Gender Equality Agency

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Unique, inimitable human resources are seen as a sustainable source of competitive advantage in the knowledge economy (e.g. Becker, Huselid, Pickus and Spratt, 1997; Guest, 1997; Purcell and Basingstoke, 2003; Jiang et al, 2012; Posthuma et al, 2013; Kehoe and Wright, 2013). Talented staff are crucial to organisational success. Academia is facing concerns over job satisfaction (Bentley et al, 2013; McInnes, 1999; Anderson, Johnson and Saha, 2002), the attractiveness of the vocation (Coates and Goedegebuure, 2012), a demographic crisis due to an ageing workforce (Hugo, 2008), and competition from other industries (Bexley, James and Arkoudis, 2011). This study focussed on schools of business and law at Australian regional universities, as they may face distinct challenges in their efforts to attract talented human capital. The regional university is an integral part of its community, industry and economy (Regional Universities Network, 2013), while the School of Business and Law may be perceived as the 'cash cows' (Pfeffer and Fong, 2004; Starkey et al. 2004) that enable its prosperity, or survival. Potentially, a range of factors conspire against the regional School of Business and Law including reputation, the ageing academic workforce, the attractiveness of the academic vocation, and location factors such as climate, access to resources, access to professional and academic networks and partnerships, and work and education opportunities for the academic's partners and children.

1.2 Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the desired employer traits of prospective and early career business and law academics in Australia. The findings will be able to be utilised by regional Australian universities to enhance their attractiveness to potential employees. Possible wider theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

1.3 Background

The attraction of highly talented employees is crucial to success in competitive industries (e.g. Becker et al, 1997; Guest, 1997; Purcell et al 2003; Jiang et al, 2012; Posthuma et al, 2013; Kehoe and Wright, 2013). The Australian Higher Education Sector is characterised by significant competition for enrolments, research funding, ranking and accreditation (Norton and Cakitaki, 2016), and human resources may be a key driver towards sustainable competitive advantage. The Australian

Government Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) (2017) reports that there are 170 higher education providers operating in Australia, including 40 universities, one specialist university and two overseas universities. The revenue of Australia's universities exceeded $35.3 billion dollars in 2017 (Australian Government Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency, 2017). Meanwhile, in the Australian Higher Education sector, $19.5 billion dollars was spent on staff in 2017 (Australian Government Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency, 2017). As employers in the knowledge economy and the increasingly competitive tertiary education sector, it is in the interests of Australian universities to attract and recruit the best employees possible.

The Regional Universities Network (RUN) (2013, p. 5) explain that Australia's regional universities play an integral role in the "competitiveness, growth, prosperity, and liveability" of their communities, as well as contributing to regional development and helping business thrive. RUN indicated that it contributed "$2.1 billion in gross domestic product, $1.2 in household income; and more than 14000 FTE [full time equivalent] jobs" to the Australian economy in 2012. The member universities of the RUN are Central Queensland University, Federation University, Southern Cross University, University of New England, University of Southern Queensland and University of the Sunshine Coast.

Australian Schools of Business and Law play a major role in the financial stability of their institution. In 2016, 380,800 students were enrolled in Management and Commerce field of education courses (those typically hosted by Schools of Business and Law), an increase of 2.9 per cent from 2015. RUN institutions hosted 24,715 Management and Commerce students in 2016, accounting for 6 per cent of students in this field of education. 190,601 international students were enrolled in Management and Commerce programs in 2016 (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017), an increase of 5.6 per cent from 2015, and approximately half of total enrolments in this field of education. Management and Commerce enrolments constituted almost half (48.7 per cent) of total international enrolments (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). Evidently, the regional university is heavily reliant on the Schools of Business and Law for enrolment numbers, particularly international students.

In terms of attracting research funding, unfortunately regional universities have limited success. In Research Block Grants for 2018, RUN institutions yielded $47,967,937 of the $1,921,099,156 distributed, equivalent to 2.4 per cent (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). In grants awarded by the Australian Research Council, RUN institutions have not had great success. In 2017/2018, 1,905 grants were awarded, totalling $1,139,633,348. Of this $1.1 billion, less than 1 per cent (0.8 per cent; $9,364,359) was awarded to RUN universities as the administering organisation (Australian Government Australian Research Council, 2018). Of the 1,905 grants awarded, only 22 (1 per cent) were administered by a RUN institution, while 116 (6 per cent) were from Fields of Research Division 14 Economics; 15 Commerce, Management, Tourism and Services; and 18 Law and Legal Studies (Australian Government Australian Research Council, 2018). Of these 116 grants, totally $65,579, 204, none were administered by a RUN institution (Australian Government Australian Research Council, 2018).

In line with low returns on research funding, Australia's regional universities reputation may be hampered by the sector's focus on university rankings. The Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2018) indicates that on average, RUN institutions outperform the national average on undergraduate student experience, undergraduate student support, undergraduate employment, undergraduate and postgraduate overall graduate satisfaction, undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, and undergraduate and postgraduate graduate median salary. The RUN institutions outperformed the 'Group of 8' (Australian National University, Monash University, The University of Adelaide, The University of New South Wales, The University of Melbourne, The University of Sydney, The University of Queensland and The University of Western Australia) on undergraduate student experience, undergraduate teaching, undergraduate learner engagement, undergraduate student support, undergraduate skills development, undergraduate and postgraduate graduate satisfaction, undergraduate and postgraduate teaching, undergraduate skills development, undergraduate full time employment, undergraduate and postgraduate full time employment, and undergraduate and postgraduate median salary (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2018). Despite success in these areas, no RUN institution gained 5 stars in the Graduate Management Association of Australia (2018) rankings, none made the Financial Times Global MBA Rankings (Financial Times, 2018), and none were ranked in the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities Top 500 (2018). In the Times Higher Education Australia

World University Rankings (2018), the highest ranked RUN institution is Southern Cross, which is ranked as the 25th best university in Australia. Central Queensland University, the highest ranked RUN university in the QS World University Rankings (2018) came in with a ranking of 601-650.

The ageing demographic of Australia's academic workforce has been a concern for some years. In 2010, Hugo and Morris indicated that approximately 56 per cent of Australian academic staff were aged over 50, reflecting a concern across all sectors and the world regarding the ageing population. In 2012, Larkin and Neumann used figures from the Australian Universities Qualities Agency audit reports of 21 Australian universities to highlight the average 11 per cent increase in academic staff aged over 50 years of age between 1997 and 2007. Of those figures presented, the RUN members included Central Queensland University (20 per cent increase), Southern Cross University (30 per cent increase), and University of the Sunshine Coast (18 per cent increase). Hugo (2008) predicted that Australia was set to lose 20 per cent to 30 per cent of its Academic workforce before 2018 (Hugo, 2008). The percentage of academic staff over 50 has hovered around 41 and 42 per cent since 2014, and in 2017 was reported as 41 per cent (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). However, the percentage of academics aged 35 and under has decreased, with 18 per cent in 2014, 16 per cent in 2015 and 2016 and 15 per cent in 2017. These changes in the ageing academic population present a concerning possibility of a demographic cliff in the future.

The composition of the Australian academic workforce is in a state of change. In Australia in 2014, there was an increase of 1,200 on-going or fixed term contract academic positions, while 8,100 PhDs were completed (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017), indicating that the supply of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) qualified potential academic staff in Australia may exceed the demand. However, this does not capture retirements which may be large given Australia's ageing academic workforce, nor resignations which may have increased due to a lack of job satisfaction. In October 2017, the esteemed journal Nature reported on a worldwide survey involving more than 5,700 early career scientists currently working on their PhDs (Anon). Three quarters of those interviewed indicated that they would likely pursue an academic career, but only three to four per cent of PhD graduates in the United Kingdom land a permanent position at a university, with the conversion rate in the United States being only slightly higher (Anon, 2017). These statistics highlight the need to broaden the career awareness

and skills of current research higher degree students. Despite a possible over-supply of qualified labour given the high number of PhD completions, attracting and selecting the best candidates remains important to the university striving for competitive advantage through its human resources. In Australia, a study of PhD completions in 2013 indicate that 1,600 had secured academic jobs by early 2014, while around the same number were also working in other roles in the higher education sector (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). In 2016, 3,307 FTE management and commerce academic staff were employed in Australian universities, equivalent to 5 per cent of all staff (Australian Government Department of Education and Training 2017). This was an increase of 1 from 2015 (3,306 to 3,307), despite a 2.9 per cent increase in the number of students (from 370,127 to 380,800 students) (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017).

Regional Australian university Schools of Business and Law are not immune to wider concerns about the attractiveness of the academic vocation. In Australia, academics complain of an increased requirement to work long hours (Coates, Dobson, Edwards, Friedman, Goedegebuure and Meek, 2009), feeling overworked (Bexley, Arkoudis and James, 2013); increasing teaching workloads (Percy and Beaumont, 2008), increasing student:staff ratios (May, 2011; Percy and Beaumont, 2008), intensified administrative workloads (May, 2011; Percy and Beaumont, 2008; Knight and Trowler, 2000), and emotional labour which leads to stress (Barrett, 2004). Meanwhile, academic staff remuneration is comparatively lower than those in other sectors (Coates et al, 2009; Percy and Beaumont, 2008), and early career academics grapple with feelings of job insecurity (Bexley, James and Arkoudis, 2011). Presumably, some will remain attracted and committed to the vocation. VanWynseberghe (2005, p4) identifies the 'deep loyalty' which transcends the qualms of the work situation, relying on individual intrinsic motivation and what is often stimulating work (Bexley, James and Arkoudis, 2011). Concerns over job satisfaction are not new. Anderson, Johnson and Saha's (2002) study found that 62 per cent of over 2,000 academics at Australian universities have experienced a decrease in job satisfaction, with 82 per cent reporting higher levels of stress. McInnes's (1999) study, also with in excess of 2,000 academics at Australian universities, led to the conclusion that job satisfaction was on the decline. More recently, a study of accounting academics by Martin-Sardesai, Irvine, Tooley and Guthrie (2017) revealed ongoing concerns regarding the impact of managerial tactics on workload and academic

job satisfaction. Bentley, Coates, Dobson Goedegebuure and Meek (2013, p. 31) found that academic satisfaction in Australia is as low as 54 per cent.

Top Gun, the film about the United States Navy, is lauded as recruitment device and is attributed to applications for naval aviators increasing by up to 500 per cent following its release (Robb, 2004). The 1986 film had a budget estimated to be $15 million (imdb.com, 2016), while in 2016 the United States Department of Defence spent $516 million on advertising (United States Government Accountability Office, 2017). While not all organisations invest this heavily, the impending retirement of the baby boomer generation and the increased attention to the value on human capital, has seen increased attention given to the emergent field of employer branding. Considerable attention has been given to researching employer attractiveness, and the traits that potential employees see as desirable. Jiang and Iles (2011, p.101) define employer attractiveness as "the degree to which potential applicants/current employees favourably perceive organisations as places to work". For Aiman-Smith, Bauer and Cable (2001, p.221), organisational attraction is "an attitude or expressed general positive affect toward an organisation and toward viewing the organisation as a desirable entity with which to initiate some relationship." Employer attractiveness positions the organisation as an employer of choice for talented individuals who can be leveraged as sources of unique, sustainable competitive advantage, and is therefore core to the effective human resource management (HRM) activities of organisations in the knowledge era.

The regional Australian university School of Business and Law may face challenges in attracting staff due to location. Hemphill and Kulik (2011) point out that worldwide, regional organisations struggle with attraction and recruitment, with potential candidates citing professional, personal and social issues to leave or refuse to work in regional locations. Unfortunately for regional universities, metrocentric thinking is compounded by media stories which expose regional Australia as a cauldron of natural disasters and extreme weather events (Collits, 2012). The urban narrative depicts regional areas in a state of decline (Collits, 2012). Metrocentric thinking regards urban centres as preferable to regional areas (Robinson 2012), ultimately limiting the attractiveness of regional Australian as a professional destination.

1.4 Research Questions and Methodology

If attraction is to be considered an important strategic HRM activity, then it is sensible to consider the nature of organisational attraction, and the organisational traits which can be exploited or leveraged for their capacity to attract talent. As employers in the knowledge economy, it is rational for the regional Australian university business school to become aware of the values, personality and interests of potential employees. Understanding the characteristics of the job seeker would allow the organisation to tailor, exploit and leverage its own traits to enhance attractiveness, and hopefully lure talented human capital.

The study will use consumer behaviour theory from the marketing discipline to examine the decision making process involved in the determination of employer of choice. In parallel with marketing theory, this approach associates the employing organisation as the product or service, and the job seeker as the consumer. Just as a consumer evaluates a product or service based on different features, this study considers that employees do the same with potential employers. The overarching research questions for this study are:

- What are the desired employer traits of prospective and early career business academics in Australia?
- What can Australian regional universities do to enhance their attractiveness to prospective and early career business academics?

The research for this thesis is exploratory sequential mixed methods, within a pragmatic, realistic philosophy. The study utilises adaptive theory, where existing theory and emergent theory is closely connected to the construction of explanatory theory and the collection of empirical data (Layder, 1998). The researcher is an insider, with significant involvement with and awareness of the business schools at regional universities in Australia.

The research consists of two phases, a qualitative interview phase, and a quantitative questionnaire phase. In the first phase, PhD students and early career researchers at RUN member institutions were interviewed. A total of 50 face to face interviews were conducted, transcribed, coded and analysed. There were 11 participants from Central Queensland University, 2 from Federation University, 11 from Southern Cross University, 9 from University of New

England, 11 from University of Southern Queensland and 6 from the University of the Sunshine Coast. In 2015, there were less than five students undertaking a PhD at University of the Sunshine Coast, twenty students at the University of New England, eight at Southern Cross University, while none were reported for Central Queensland University, Federation University or the University of Southern Queensland (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2018). Thus, the approximate population size for current PhD students in Law at the RUN member institutions is 33. Eight current PhD students in Law were interviewed, five of which were doing their PhD through a RUN member institution. Five early career academics in Law were interviewed, of which one had completed their PhD at a RUN member institution. Meanwhile in Management and Commerce, Central Queensland University reported 47, Federation University 30, Southern Cross University 126, University of New England 73, University of Southern Queensland 120 and University of the Sunshine Coast less than 5 in 9 sub-disciplines (a maximum of 36). Twenty-two current PhD students in Management and Commerce were interviewed, twenty of whom were doing their PhD through a RUN member institution. Fourteen early career academics in Management and Commerce were interviewed, seven of whom had completed their PhD at a RUN member institution. The purpose of the qualitative phase of this research was to validate the selection of traits for consideration in employer branding in the Australian university context.

In the quantitative phase, a questionnaire was sent to PhD Students and early career academics at all of Australia's universities. Again, early career academics were defined as those who had completed their PhD in the past five years. Only respondents currently residing in Australia, who indicated that they were keen to pursue a career as an academic at an Australian university were eligible. In 2015, in Management and Commerce, there was 3,860 people enrolled in PhD studies while in Law there was 1,016 (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2018). In Management and Commerce, there were 232 eligible respondents to the questionnaire (6 per cent of the population). In the law discipline, there were 72 eligible respondents to the questionnaire (7 per cent of the population). Early career researchers were defined as those who have completed their PhD in the most recent five years. PhD completions from 2010 to 2014 numbered at 2,613 in Management and Commerce and 564 in Law (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2018). In Management and Commerce, there were 199 eligible respondents to the questionnaire (7 per cent of the population). In the Law discipline,

there were 38 eligible respondents to the questionnaire (6 per cent of the population). The total population size (all current PhD students and early career academics in Business and Law) is estimated at 8,053. A total of 540 complete, eligible responses was collected through the quantitative phase of this study (6 per cent of the population). With a 95 per cent confidence interview, the margin of error is 4.1 per cent.

1.5 Organisation of this Thesis

This thesis comprises 11 chapters. The introduction is followed by two chapters (The Academic Vocation and Australia's Regional Universities) that offer a contextual overlay for the study. The Academic Vocation explores demographic trends in the Australian academic workforces, the job satisfaction of academic staff, mobility and competition from other industries, and the structure of the academic role. Exploration of the characteristics of each of Australia's RUN member institutions is provided in Chapter 3, including insight into their unique challenges. The chapter 'Human Capital in Academia' explores literature pertinent to the value of human resources in the contemporary organisation. Chapter 5 provides a detailed review of employer branding. Chapter 6 details the research approach, research design, research instruments, data collection, analysis, ethics, objectivity and truthfulness and limitations. The results of the interview component of the study are presented in Chapter 7. The results of the questionnaire component in Chapter 8 and 9, separated by their response to each of the two principal research question. Chapter 10 provides a discussion and overview of implications for theory and practice. Chapter 11 discussed the limitations of the study, areas for future research, and concludes the thesis.

2.0 The Academic Vocation

This chapter explores the ageing academic population, academic job satisfaction, mobility of academic staff and the attractiveness of the academic vocation. It begins by delving into concerning demographic trends in the academic workforce. Research into academic job satisfaction, presented in section 2.1, reveals a number of concerns for academia. Staff complain of factors such as excessive workloads, stress, a lack of work/life balance, salary comparatively lower to industry, and reduced autonomy. The effect of job satisfaction on the mobility of academic staff is discussed in section 2.2, including consideration of the mobility of academic staff to the lure of industries outside of academia, and the lure of working overseas. The attractiveness of the vocation, in light of concerns over job satisfaction are discussed in section 2.4.

2.1 The Ageing Academic Population

With the impending retirement of the baby boomer generation, and the smaller size of later generations (Kwok, Lloyd and Yip, 2013), there is an increased fear of labour shortages and competition for a shrinking talent pool (Drury, 2016; Dohm, 2000). The number of Australians aged over 65 is set to increase from 3 to 8.1 million. The Australian Government Department of Employment Workforce Ageing Report (2012) reported that by 2026, the median age of the Australian population was set to increase from 36.9 to 39.7 years.

The ageing academic population has been recognised as a concern for some time. In 2005 (p.16), in Hugo's Australian Universities Review article "Academia's own demographic time-tomb", he cited WD Borrie, a leading Australian demographer in the 1960s, who explained that "an approaching tidal wave of baby boomers about to enter universities on the one hand and the meagre number of graduates of the last decade who were available to provide the tertiary staff required on the other". The more recent impending crises are not the result of an extended influx of students (this has already happened), but rather the retirement of those working in academia.

Data obtained from the Australian Government Department of Education and Training (2018) reveals that the problem of the ageing academic population remains. From 2013 to 2017, the proportion of academic staff aged over 55 has grown 2.6 per cent nationally. At RUN institutions,

the growth rate is higher, at 4.3 per cent. RUN institutions are almost 7 per cent ahead of the national average in the proportion of academic staff aged over 55. Meanwhile the proportion of academic staff aged under 40 has dropped 1.6 per cent nationally (RUN institutions have had a slight increase of 0.3 per cent). Alarmingly, RUN institutions are almost 10 per cent behind the national average in the proportion of academic staff aged under 40. In 2017, almost 7 per cent of academic staff are aged over 65, an increase from 5 per cent in 2013. In 2017, 16 per cent of academic staff are aged over 60, an increase from 13 per cent in 2013. The data reveals that there are 195 academics at RUN institutions aged over 65 years, and 350 aged between 60 and 64. In aggregating the data obtained from the Australian Government Department of Education and Training, where more than 0 but less than 5 staff were reported for a particular age group, this was rounded to 5 staff.

Table 2-1 Percentage of Academic Staff Aged Under 40 and Over 55 at RUN Universities

	% of Academic Staff Aged Under 40				**% of Academic Staff Aged Over 55**		
	2013	2017	% Change		2013	2017	% Change
Central Queensland University	23.0%	21.5%	-1.5%		30.2%	33.7%	3.5%
Federation University Australia	21.7%	22.0%	0.3%		26.3%	35.0%	8.7%
Southern Cross University	18.9%	19.5%	0.6%		34.3%	39.3%	5.0%
University of New England	20.3%	22.6%	2.3%		33.9%	35.8%	1.9%
University of Southern Queensland	16.5%	17.8%	1.3%		34.5%	36.3%	1.8%
University of the Sunshine Coast	22.9%	21.8%	-1.1%		26.8%	31.7%	4.9%
RUN Average %	20.5%	20.9%	0.3%		31.0%	35.3%	4.3%
National Average %	32.4%	30.8%	-1.6%		25.9%	28.5%	2.6%

Data was also collected pertaining to academics in schools of Business and Law in Australia. Given the discipline area classifications used by the Australian Government Department of Education

and Training, data for those subscribed to the Business and Management, or Law, disciplines was analysed. The data indicates that the percentage of academic staff aged under 40 has increased by 0.6 per cent (11 staff) between 2013 and 2017. The number of academic staff aged over 55 has increased by 9, or 0.9 per cent). The number of academic staff aged 65 or over has increased 3 per cent from 123 staff to 180 staff. In comparing 2013 and 2016, the number of full time and fractional full time business, management and law academics actually reduced by 42 staff, while the number of students increased by 12,986 students (83,725 to 96,711 students). The full time and fractional FTE staff numbers rebounded in 2017, up to 1,972 (4 more than the 1,968 recorded in 2013). The percentage of academic staff aged under 40 is considerably lower in the business and management, and law disciplines. Similarly, the percentage of staff aged over 55 is considerably higher in the business and management and law disciplines, than across all disciplines. In business and management and law, in 2017, there were 407 staff aged between 60 and 64, and 180 academic staff aged 65 and over.

Table 2-2 Percentage of Academic Staff Aged Under 40 and Over 55 within Business and Management and Law Disciplines

	% of Academic Staff Aged Under 40				**% of Academic Staff Aged Over 55**		
	2013	2017	% Change		2013	2017	% Change
Business and Management and Law	21.1%	21.7%	0.6%		33.9%	34.8%	0.9%
National Average %	32.4%	30.8%	-1.6%		25.9%	28.5%	2.6%

Edwards, Bexley and Richardson (2011) explain, "a missing generation of academics – Generation X – has left a risky hole in the age profile of the workforce as Baby Boomers move towards retirement". Data collected from the Australian Government Department of Education and Training indicates that there has been a 0.15 per cent drop in staff aged between 40 and 50, a drop of 1.42 per cent staff aged under 40, and a 1.27 per cent increase in staff aged over 50.

Table 2-3 Percentage change of Full-Time and Fractional Full-Time Australian Academic Staff by Age Group

Reference year	**2013**	**2013**	**2017**	**2017**	**2013-2017**
Age group categorised	Staff numbers	% of Total	Staff numbers	% of Total	% change
01. < 25	202	0.39%	117	0.21%	-0.18%
02. 25-29	2,606	5.07%	2,092	3.76%	-1.31%
03. 30-34	6,601	12.84%	6,642	11.93%	-0.91%
04. 35-39	7,134	13.88%	8,267	14.85%	0.98%
05. 40-44	6,997	13.61%	7,957	14.30%	0.69%
06. 45-49	7,124	13.86%	7,414	13.32%	-0.54%
07. 50-54	7,431	14.45%	7,292	13.10%	-1.35%
08. 55-59	6,437	12.52%	7,066	12.69%	0.17%
09. 60-64	4,287	8.34%	5,021	9.02%	0.68%
10. > 64	2,595	5.05%	3,794	6.82%	1.77%
TOTAL	**51,414**		**55,662**		

2.2 Academic Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is crucial for organisational productivity, performance and individual wellbeing (Long, 2005). Judge, Thoresen, Bono and Patten (2001) found that in complex roles that require autonomy (such as academia), job satisfaction is significantly correlated with performance. As Coates et al (2009) explains, research students ultimately have little interest in pursuing the same work their supervisors have been burdened with, and instead examine alternatives. Also of concern, scholars suggest that academic job satisfaction is highly correlated with learning outcomes for students (Hartman, Dziuban, and Moskal, 2000).

Concerns over academic job satisfaction are not new. In 1997, Lacy and Sheehan (p. 306) revealed that only 49 per cent of academics in Australia felt satisfaction with their work. McInnes and Anderson (2005) found that job satisfaction had plummeted, the result of a decrease from 67 per cent in 1994 to only 51 per cent in 1999 (McInnes, 1999, p.8). Bentley et al (2013) explain that the decrease was attributed to workload changes, resource availability, salary and increased

accountability. Winefield, Boyd, Saebel and Pignata (2008), Winefield, Gillespie, Stough, Dua, Hapuarachchi and Boyd (2003) and Winefield and Jarrett (2001) revealed that while job satisfaction seemed to stabilise in the early 2000s, stress, attributable to reduced autonomy and workload concerns was a major issue.

Coates, Dobson, Edwards, Friedman, Goedegebuure and Meek (2009) utilise data collected from the 2007 Changing Academic Profession (CAP) survey which collected responses from 25 different countries, and included respondents from twenty of Australia's universities, and 1,370 academics. In the survey, Australian academics reported the second lowest levels of job satisfaction (along with Portugal and China), and second only to the United Kingdom (Coates et al, 2009). Associate professors and professors report higher job satisfaction than assistant lecturers, lecturers and senior lecturers report, reflecting a potential concern regarding job satisfaction for younger employees. This finding aligns with interviews conducted by Edwards and Smith (2008), where science and mathematics early career researchers and postgraduate students reported concerns over job satisfaction. Coates et al (2009) also discover that academic job satisfaction is lower than other professions in Australia.

In 2015, Duncan, Tilbrook and Krivokapic-Skoko conducted a study examining the happiness of academic staff at a regional university. The opening comment in their article flagged that "Australian academics appear to be an unhappy lot". The purpose of their study was to investigate which daily activities academics conduct, and how these affect happiness. Calling on concepts including flow (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996), autonomy, mastery and purpose (Pink, 2009) and intrinsic motivation (Amabile, 1998) as key constituents of happiness, Duncan, Tilbrook and Krivokapic-Skoko (2015) discovered that academic staff were at their happiest when a generous portion of their day could be dedicated to research, and the lowest levels of happiness when days were fragmented by a range of tasks. Duncan, Tilbrook and Krivokapic-Skoko (2015) suggest that to achieve flow and mastery, academics would require concentrated time on individual tasks, but achieving this is difficult when academics are required to respond to interruptions including emails and phone calls. A troubling finding of Duncan, Tilbrook and Krivokapic-Skoko's (2015, p.11) research is that while academics feel a sense of effectiveness through subject delivery (teaching), this achievement did not lead to happiness because the "academic is aware that long-term job tenure and promotion relies on research outcomes rather than teaching ones". If the

academic is unhappy performing a key component of their role, and key purpose for the university, the impact on the student experience and learning outcomes comes into question. The study collected data from only six teaching and research academics at lecture and senior lecture at one regional Australian university, so may not be representative of the broader perspective, but the prevailing concern regarding time to focus on particular components of the role is mimicked in other studies.

Academics face significant concerns regarding job security. How job security impacts on performance is still a matter of scholarly discussion but evidence has long suggested that commitment, job satisfaction, performance, and indeed staff turnover, are closely related (Shore and Martin, 1989). Judge et al.'s (2001) two large meta-analyses, taking advantage of 312 separate studies with a combined total N of over 50,000, indicate that job satisfaction explains a surprisingly large proportion of job performance (r=0.3). Additionally, Gilboa et al. (2008) found that work-related stressors, such as role ambiguity and job insecurity, were significantly negatively related with job performance measures. Coates et al (2009) explain that "if the increase in short-term academic positions continues, it is likely that many young researchers will be discouraged from following an academic career".

Elevated levels of casualisation plague the industry, but particularly in the discipline of management and commerce were in 2011, 29.1 per cent of staff were appointed on casual contracts (Tsen-Kwok, 2013). There are inherent benefits to some casual appointment; they allow both students and faculty to engage with industry experts and practitioners, which potentially strengthens partnerships, networks and real-world instruction. There has been considerable commentary (e.g. Coates and Goedegebuure, 2010; Cowley, 2010; Kift, 2003) about the increasing front-line work conducted by non-permanent staff. May, Strachan and Peetz (2013, p.1) indicate that "most undergraduate teaching in Australia's universities is now conducted by hourly paid staff". The proportion of sessional academic staff in Australia's universities has grown from 11 per cent in 1990 to 22 per cent in 2011. The trend to deploy "disposable faculty" has been criticised by the likes of Entin (2005), but Kift (2003) encourages us to avoid lamenting the reforms that have triggered academic casualisation, as well as the resultant marginalisation of those enlisted. Rather, with student interests in mind, it would be beneficial to embrace and nurture the approach (Kift, 2003). As May, Stratchan and Peetz (2013) cite the work of Percy, Scoufis, Parry,

Goody, Hicks, Macdonald, Martinez, Szorenyi-Reischl, Ryan, Willis, and Sheridan (2008) in highlighting that few universities have developed strategies to address the professional needs of sessional academics (Percy et al., 2008) with appropriate work practice, performance management, and policies related to sessional staff usually being implemented in an ad hoc manner. Despite the benefits of providing sessional staff with professional development, they are "almost routinely excluded from training and staff development opportunities" (Kift, 2003, p3). However, many sessional employees may demonstrate low attendance at casual employer events by choice, rather than exclusion (Gottschalk and McEachern, 2007). Whatever the cause, the lack of engagement can have a major effect on the performance of the whole organisation. Relying on sessional academic can negatively affect performance in several ways, such as poor commitment, lack of preparation, lack of appropriate qualifications, and the absence of performance management (Anibas et al., 2009; Percy and Beaumont, 2008). In Entin's (2005, p28) criticism of the use of "disposable faculty", he posits that "The widespread use of and exploitation of contingent teachers […] has serious pedagogical implications". Further, from Entin's perspective (2005, p28) "The conditions of flex teaching […] discourage scholarly growth, pedagogical innovation, and individual attention to students". Despite this, there are relatively few empirical studies examining aspects of academic performance and student learning. However, there have been studies showing significant links between an academic's engagement with research and broad student satisfaction (Scott, 1975). Barrett (2004) indicates that this leads to violation of the psychological contract between its employers and employees, and stress increases. Numerous researchers (e.g. May, 2011; Percy and Beaumont, 2008; Barrett, 2004) have indicated that sessional academic staff struggle with university community isolation, poor work/life balance, income insecurity, unpaid work, inadequate resources, and inadequate access to facilities. Brown, Goodman and Yasukawa (2010, p.170) explain that "casuals on the periphery are deskilled and marginalised in scholarly life, threatening the status of higher education as a public good, and thereby redefining the fields of knowledge".

Coates et al (2009) discuss the workload characteristics of academics in Australia, reporting that Australian academics work among the highest number of hours per week compared with other countries. They note that weekly working hours have increased 5 hours per week during teaching periods. In the 30 years in which these studies span, teaching time has decreased 5 hours, research increased 3 hours, and administration increased 2.5 hours per week. Coates et al (2009) also cite

comparisons with the 1992 Carnegie study, which shows no increase in hours, despite documented concerns regarding workload. Comparison with Carnegie study (1992) reveals a decrease in teaching hours. Along with more hours compared with their international counterparts, academics work more hours than the average Australian worker. While Australian academics worked 50.6 hours per week during teaching periods and 49.6 hours per week during non teaching periods, the average full-time Australian worker puts in 39.4 hours per week (Coates et al, 2009).

Academic staff at Australian universities are not particularly fond of university management. Coates et al's (2009) analysis of the CAP survey data indicated that Australian academics have the third worst (after the United Kingdom and Hong Kong) attitude towards university management. Orr and Orr (2016, p.15) criticise the "rationalisation triumvirate of metrics, managerialism and bureaucratisation" which now pervade efforts to optimise performance in Australian universities. Their qualitative analysis reveals that is not only ineffective in assessing academic achievement, it has failed to improve universities, and ultimately "replaces the core values of education with hollow bureaucratic instrumentalism" (Orr and Orr, 2016, p.15). Vidovich (1998) reported that in response to the influx of quality policies and practices between 1992 and 1995, 91 per cent of academics complained of dramatically increased accountability requirements. Kimber and Ehrich (2015, p.83) use the theory of democratic deficit to support the position that "the increased power of managers, expansion of the audit culture and the extensive use of contract employment seem to be weakening the democratic culture and role of universities in part by replacing accountability as responsibility with accountability as responsiveness", ultimately weakening the university through managerial policies and practices. A study by McInnis (1998) examines the impact of changes to management practice, reductions in funding and organisational restructuring at Australia's universities. The results indicate an increase in working hours from 47.7 to 49.2 per week, a drop in job satisfaction from 67 per cent to 51 per cent, and a greater proportion of staff having a much stronger interest in research than teaching (35 per cent to 41 per cent). Martin-Sardesai, Irvine, Tooley and Guthrie (2016) explain that the influence of new public management reforms and managerialism in the past three decades has eroded traditional academic values of collegiality and autonomy.

Shin and Jung (2013) examined academic job satisfaction across 19 higher education systems are the world. Using regression analysis, they (Shin and Jung, 2013) tested the impact on new public management practices on job satisfaction and stress. The findings reveal that market oriented managerial reforms are indeed the main source of job stress for academics (Shin and Jung, 2013). Australia joined the UK, Germany, China and Hong Kong as systems where academics demonstrated high job stress and low job satisfaction.

Academic proletarianization is the term that has been used to describe the impost of managerialism (Locke and Bennion, 2013), the commodification of research resulting from performance-based evaluation (Firat and Akkuzu, 2015), and the increasing gap between salaries of academics and their industry-based counterparts. As McCarthy, Song and Jayasuriya (2017, p. 1017) explain, "academics have lost their privileged position due to a system of surveillance and managerial control to the point they are de-professionalised."

The studies above highlight that academics spend reduced time on teaching (Coates et al, 2009) and demonstrate decreased interest in teaching (McInnes, 1999) may be the result of efficiencies created by universities to reduce teaching contact hours for courses (particularly where hourly paid sessional staff are involved in instruction), but also as Orr and Orr (2016, p. 25) explain, "fatigued academic staff" endeavouring to "ignore the nuisances of managerialism and the superficiality of the new academic culture" and focus "on one's own research as a strategy for surviving the system".

A study by Pop-Vasileva, Baird and Blair (2013) specifically examines the work-related attitudes of Australian accounting academics. In this study, Pop-Vasileva, Baird and Blair (2013) surveyed 350 academics staff to investigate job satisfaction, and intention to remain in academia. They (Pop-Vasileva, Baird and Blair, 2013) point out the higher student/staff ratios, over-enrolments, staff shortages, larger classes and poorer quality students that put pressure on accounting academics, and restrict their ability to conduct research. The results of their study indicate that while accounting academics report low job satisfaction and moderate job stress, their propensity to remain in academic was quite high (Pop-Vasileva, Baird and Blair, 2013).

2.3 Mobility

Academic staff are lured to other countries and other sectors outside of higher education. Coates et al's (2009) study revealed that compared with their international counterparts, Australian academics were the most likely to consider a change away from academia. The same study revealed that, in terms of concrete action to change jobs, 22.6 per cent of Australian academics pursued a management position within the institution, 49.7 per cent pursued an academic position in another institute in the same country, 30.9 per cent pursued an academic position in another country, and 28.2 per cent pursued work outside of higher education. Coates et al (2009) suggest that this is concerning unless counteracted by an inflow of academics from overseas. Indeed, in the past, academic shortages in Australia have been addressed by importing suitably qualified staff. However, Hugo (2008) explains Australian universities now cannot rely on academics from overseas to solve talent shortages, because now many countries, not just Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States of America are seeking skilled migrants, and Australian academics are also increasingly lured to opportunities abroad.

Coates et al (2009) discover that lower ranked academic staff in Australia (Assistant to Senior Lectures), are more likely to have taken concrete action to pursue work outside of the higher education sector, compared with those overseas. The research conducted by Coates et al (2009) also examines concrete action to change jobs analysed by university grouping. Their 'Other' grouping, which consisted of regional and younger universities (not those in the G08, Australian Technology Network (ATN), or Innovative Research Universities (IRU)) was analysed to reveal that 26.2 per cent of respondents had taken concrete action towards changing jobs to a management position in the same institution, 52.4 per cent to an academic position in another institute in Australia, 25.6 per cent to academic positions in another country, and 28 per cent towards work outside of the higher education sector. Edwards et al (2011) study of the regeneration of the academic workforce revealed that only 25.9 per cent of those with a PhD are working in the University and Vocational Education Teachers occupation group, indicating that those with PhD are electing or conceding career choices other than academia.

2.4 The Attractiveness of the Academic Vocation

Unfortunately, it appears that the workplace environment for academics has deteriorated since the proliferation of managerialism in the 1980s (e.g. Kinman and Jones, 2008; Houston et al. 2006; Tytherleigh et al, 2005; Harman, 2001). The increase in workloads, concerns over work life balance, pay that is comparatively lower than industry counterparts, and concerns over job security would conceivably have deterred incumbents from pursuing the vocation. Anderson, Johnson and Saha (2002) explain that the attractiveness of academic in Australian was depleted due to declines in salary, status, autonomy and prestige.

It would appear that the next generation of suitably qualified academic staff are indeed studying the pre-requisite qualification (PhD) for appointment. In 1949, there were 329 people enrolled in higher degrees (by research or coursework) in Australia. In 1989, there were 14,751 research higher degree students, which had grown to 35,625 by 1998 (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). The number of persons enrolled in research higher degrees had grown by 41 per cent between 1989 and 1998. In 2016, there was 57,808 research higher degree students enrolled at Australia's universities, reflecting a growth of only 62 per cent between 1998 and 2016. In 2004, there were 38,953 Doctorate by Research students, compared with 57,808 in 2016, reflecting a growth of 48 per cent. During the same period, all enrolments have grown from 957,176 in 2004 and 1,457,209 in 2016, reflecting a growth rate of 52 per cent.

Edwards et al (2011) explain that a key determinant in the prospective academic's intentions to pursue an academic career rests in their observations and interactions with the academic staff they encounter. Harman (2002, 2006) found that while many PhD intended to pursue an academic career on commencement of their studies, their exposure to the academic world depleted their aspirations. Researcher have discussed many of the concerns that current PhD students consider in determining if academia is the right fit for them:

- Richlin and Essington (2004) discuss the early career academics concerns regarding the lack of job security given the proliferation of short term contracts;
- Monastersky (2007) discusses the competitive nature of research;
- Mills, Jepson, Coxon, Hawkins and Spencer (2006) discuss the fear of exploration;
- Gardner (2008) discusses the feelings of isolation when conducting research;

- Portnoi (2009) discusses concerns that a lack of support during studies is reflective of a lack of support in academic work.

In 2002, junior academic salaries were below the national average for weekly income (Horsley and Woodburne, 2005). In 1979, highly ranked academics in Australia earned more than three times average weekly earnings, but by 2002, this had reduced to approximately two and a half times the average weekly earnings (Horsley and Woodburne, 2005). In 2008, salaries dropped to as low as 80 per cent of average weekly earnings (Coates and Goedegebuurem 2010), however Australian academic salaries are still relatively high when compared with international counterparts (Coates et al, 2009).

However, there are concerns regarding the availability of positions, and the success in attaining a position. In 2005, a survey by Pearson, Cumming, Evans, Macauley and Ryland (2008) revealed that only 39 per cent had intentions to pursue an academic career. However, in 2011, a report by Edwards et al surveying some 8,710 current PhD students in Australia revealed that, in the medium to long term, 57.1 per cent of respondents intended to pursue an academic position, but 43.2 per cent intended to do so overseas. In the field of management and commerce, 63 per cent of respondents indicated that they had ambitions to pursue an academic career in the medium to long term (Edwards et al, 2011).

2.5 The Composition of Academic Work, Career and Promotion

In 2009, Enders and DeWeert noted that the typical academic work and career structure was no longer in tune with realities of contemporary practice. But what is the typical academic work and career structure? The typical composition of academic work is discussed by Boyer (1990), who identifies four key components of academic work: scholarship of discovery; scholarship of teaching; scholarship of integration; and scholarship of application. Traditionally, academic work has involved a focus on teaching, research and service. This has been described as the 40/40/20 model (Australian Higher Education Industrial Association, 2016) because academics are expected to spend 40 per cent of their time on research, 40 per cent of their time on teaching, and 20 per cent of their time on service to the university and community. The need to reconfigure academic work has been posed as a critical area of change for universities (Coates and Goedegebuure, 2012).

There seems to be some changes, with the rise of teaching focussed academics in universities in Australia (Bennett, Roberts, Ananthram and Broughton, 2017). However, while these teaching roles seem to have a positive impact on student learning and teaching quality (Vajoczki, Fenton, Menard and Pollon. 2011), there is suggestion that these roles are not well respected (Clarke, Drennon, Hyde and Politis, 2015), they are seen as a negative career move (Bennett, Roberts, Ananthram and Broughton, 2017), and they may lead to the stratification of the career (Probert, 2013).

Coates and Goedegebuure (2012) explain that, "The 'making' of an academic is not a simple matter, with almost a decade required to prepare an individual for even an entry-level role—from bachelor to master to PhD." The journey is indeed a long and onerous "pipeline" (Anderson et al, 2002). Bennett, Roberts, Ananthram and Broughton (2017, p.279) suggest that academics had traditionally experienced a linear development within a stable organisation, but indicate that more recently, academic careers have become "boundaryless, characterized by weak environmental constraints, high individual agency, and high intra-institutional and inter-institutional mobility". However, current trends seem to indicate that academic staff are more vulnerable to "involuntary unemployment, under-employment and role transition" and, in line with the commodification of research, such boundaryless careers are reserved only for star scientists and top researchers (Bennett, Roberts, Ananthram and Broughton, 2017, p.279). For the regional university, inter-institutional mobility may be more difficult as typically only one university operates in each location.

Academic development and career growth (from associate lecturer, to lecturer, association professor and profession) within universities is a sought after commodity, as it carries additional salary, status, esteem and power. Vardi and Quin (2011) explain that promotion within universities has been traditionally been principally tied to research productivity, and while universities now include scholarship of learning and teaching in their promotional criteria, some view promotion by means of teaching scholarship as an inferior pathway. Role hierarchies in Australian universities typically regard research above teaching (Bennett, Roberts, Ananthram and Broughton, 2017).

2.6 Summary

As Bentley, Coates, Dobson, Goedegebuure and Meek (2013) explain, "Academics hold central positions in the knowledge society through their traditional roles as producers of knowledge and educators of knowledge workers". There are concerns that, in Australia, this important role is hampered by concerns over job satisfaction, is tinkering on the edge of a demographic cliff and is losing talent to the lure of overseas or overseas. The varying career intentions of those enduring the academic apprenticeship, the PhD, suggests that many intend to pursue careers outside of academia, perpetuating concerns over the attractiveness of the vocation. If the academic vocation itself is unattractive, and suitably qualified academics staff are considering careers outside of academia, and outside of Australia, this presents concerns for the attraction of academic staff to universities in Australia. The decision of some academic apprentices to choose alternative careers may be attributable to the perception of better conditions in other industries or other countries. Moreover, they may be attributable to concerns regarding job satisfaction of the incumbent academic workforce. This chapter has also provided an overview of the typical composition of academic work, and overviews arguments presented in key literature regarding changes to this approach.

3.0 Regional Universities in the context of Higher Education in Australia

This chapter investigates the positioning and plight of regional universities in the context of higher education in Australia. It begins with a panoptical view of the higher education in Australia, pointing to the ensuing converge of university mission and lack of differentiation.

Exploring the differentiation of universities in Australia offers some valuable insights. The term differentiation is used interchangeably with the term diversity by scholars. Codling and Meek (2006) defined diversity as, "differences between institutions within a single higher education system". In this thesis, the term differentiation is used to discuss meaningful differences in strategy between universities in the Australian higher education. Historically, Australia operated under a binary system of higher education, with the Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs) established in the 1960s as degree-granting institutions (Codling and Meek, 2006). In the unification of the higher education sector in 1990, the CAEs transformed into universities, but in reality, many of the CAEs had been endeavouring to become more like their more illustrious counterparts (Codling and Meek, 2006). Despite the system now being labelled as unified, an unofficial stratification of universities exists. Meek, Goedegebuure and Huisman (2000), point out that within the Australian higher education, despite the idea that deregulated competition-based sector would result in functional differentiation of universities, all universities endeavour to emulate the nation's research intensive universities. Because it is impossible for the Australian Government to fund all universities as world-class research intensive universities, unfortunately "emulation results in second rate imitations" Meek, Goedegebuure and Huisman (2000, p. 2). Codling and Meek (2006, p. 41) explain that there has been some mission creep, particularly in vocational aspects, for traditionally research intensive universities, and mission creep, in terms of academic aspects, of the less research intensive universities. They (Codling and Meek, 2006) point out that convergence is centrally driven by the desire of the lower ranked universities to emulate the status of their more renowned counterparts, but also uniform funding and policies encourage universities to respond in similar ways. The history of most RUN institutions lies in being a CAE, they remain in the lower ranks of league tables, and funding mechanisms and policy continue to encourage similar responses and behaviours.

There are 37 Australian public universities and 3 private universities in Australia. There are four widely recognised groupings of universities in Australia: the Go8, ATN, IRU and RUN. The member institutions are shown in Table 3.1.

Table 3-1 Member Institutions

Go8	**ATN**	**IRU**	**RUN**
• Australian National University • Monash University • University of Adelaide • University of Melbourne • University of New South Wales • University of Queensland • University of Sydney • University of Western Australia	• Curtin University • Queensland University of Technology • RMIT University • University of South Australia • University of Technology Sydney	• Charles Darwin University • Flinders University • Griffith University • James Cook University • La Trobe University • Murdoch University • Western Sydney University	• Central Queensland University • Federation University Australia • Southern Cross University • University of New England • University of Southern Queensland • University of the Sunshine Coast
Others • Australian Catholic University • Bond University • Charles Sturt University • Deakin University • Edith Cowan University • Macquarie University • Swinburne University of Technology • Torrens University Australia • University of Canberra			

- University of Newcastle
- University of Notre Dame Australia
- University of Tasmania
- University of Wollongong
- Victoria University

Representing the interests of Australia's eight most research intensive universities (University of Melbourne, Australian National University, University of Sydney, University of Queensland, University of Western Australia, University of Adelaide, Monash University and University of New South Wales), the Go8 indicate that they, "are focussed on, and a leader in, influencing the development and delivery of long-term sustainable national higher education and research policy, and in developing international alliances" (Group of Eight, 2018). Meanwhile, the ATN (comprising of Curtin University, Queensland University of Technology, RMIT University, University of South Australia and University of Technology Sydney), indicate that they are "recognised as a global leader of a new generation of universities focused on industry collaboration, real-world research with real-world impact and produce work-ready graduates to become global thinkers in business and the community" (Australian Technology Network, 2018). The IRU (Charles Darwin University, James Cook University, Griffith University, La Trobe University, Flinders University, Murdoch University and Western Sydney University) tell us that, "Inclusive excellence is the IRU commitment to reach and serve local and global communities through an effective response for all who seek our services at the highest standards in teaching, learning and research" (Innovative Research Universities, 2018). The RUN group have a starkly different mission, indicating that their objectives are to "provide policy advice to government, particularly with regard to tertiary education and regional development", "strengthen and promote the contributions of regional universities to regional and national development" and "build institutional capacity and sustainability through the sharing of best practice in educational delivery, training, research and organisational management, particularly with reference to regional contexts." (Regional Universities Network, 2018). RUN "unlock the creativity, talent and potential of regional communities by making higher education fully accessible and achievable, enrolling higher concentrations of low socio-economic and Indigenous students than metropolitan universities" and "produce, retain and attract a broad range of qualified professionals needed for regional development and economic diversification and growth".

Marketisation has had significant impacts on the higher education sector in Australia (McCarthy, Song and Jayasuriya, 2015; Craig, 2014). One impact has been the increased interest in University rankings and accreditations. In these rankings, regional universities do not perform particularly well. Codling and Meek (2006) highlight that there is a natural tendency for university stakeholders to compare the ranking or status of their university with competitors.

The Shanghai University rankings does not rank any RUN member institution. Nationally, the G08 Group universities hold positions one through to eight, the ATN universities are scattered between nine and twenty-three, the IRU between fifteen and twenty-three, within Deakin University, Macquarie University, Swinburne University of Technology, University of Newcastle, University of Tasmania and University of Wollongong also ranked. The list of national rankings for Shanghai is shown in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2 Shanghai National Rankings Australia

National Ranking	**University**
1	The University of Melbourne
2	The University of Queensland
3	Monash University
4	University of Sydney
5	University of Western Australia
6	Australian National University
7-8	University of Adelaide; University of New South Wales
9-10	Curtin University of Technology; Macquarie University
11-14	Deakin University; Queensland University of Technology; University of Tasmania; University of Wollongong
15-21	James Cook University; Griffith University; La Trobe University; Swinburne University of Technology; University of Newcastle
22-23	Flinders University; RMIT University

The Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings also see the RUN member institutions grouped at the lower end of Australia's universities. The highest ranked RUN institution in this grouping is Southern Cross University, at number 25, followed by Central Queensland University, Federation University and University of the Sunshine Coast, who share

30th place. The University of Southern Queensland is ranked at number 35. Australian universities rankings in the THE rankings are shown in Table 3-4.

Table 3-4 Australian University Rankings in the Times Higher Education World University Rankings

Ranking	University
1	University of Melbourne
2	Australian National University
3	University of Sydney
4	University of Queensland
5	Monash University
6	University of New South Wales
7	University of Western Australia
8	University of Adelaide
9	James Cook University; Queensland University of Technology; University of South Australia; University of Technology Sydney
13	Griffith University; Macquarie University; University of Newcastle; University of Wollongong;
17	Charles Darwin University; Deakin University; Flinders University; University of Tasmania; Victoria University
22	La Trobe University; University of Canberra
25	Murdoch University; RMIT University; Southern Cross University; Western Sydney University
30	Australian Catholic University; Bond University; Central Queensland University; Edith Cowan University; Federation University; University of the Sunshine Coast
35	University of Southern Queensland

The Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University rankings again show the Go8 dominating nationally, following by the ATN, IRU and RUN. Central Queensland University, the highest ranked RUN university in the QS World University Rankings (2018) came in with a ranking of 601-650, while University of Southern Queensland achieved 751-800, and Southern Cross University, University of the Sunshine Coast and University of New England achieved a ranking of between 801 and 1000h place. Australian universities rankings in the QS World University rankings are shown in Table 3-3.

Table 3-3 Australian University Rankings in QS World University Rankings

Ranking	University
20	Australian National University
41	University of Melbourne
45	University of New South Wales
47	University of Queensland
50	University of Sydney
60	Monash University
93	University of Western Australia
109	University of Adelaide
176	University of Technology Sydney
224	University of Newcastle
232	University of Wollongong
240	Macquarie University
247	Queensland University of Technology; RMIT University
262	Curtin University of Technology
279	University of South Australia
293	Deakin University
313	University of Tasmania
325	Griffith University
360	La Trobe University
367	James Cook University
421-430	Swinburne University of Technology
431-440	Bond University
501-550	Murdoch University
551-600	Flinders University; University of Canberra; Western Sydney University
601-650	Central Queensland University
651-700	Charles Darwin University
701-750	Victoria University
751-800	Edith Cowan University; University of Southern Queensland
801-1000	Australian Catholic University; Charles Sturt University; Southern Cross University; University of New England; University of the Sunshine Coast;

The Graduate Management Association of Australia has awarded 5 Star Master of Business Administration (MBA) Rankings to two Go8 Universities (University of Queensland and University of Adelaide), two ATN Universities (Queensland University of Technology and University of South

Australia), along with University of Wollongong. No RUN member institution holds a GMAA 5 Star MBA rankings. The Financial Times evaluates MBA programs of universities worldwide. Two Go8 Universities perform well on this metric, with University of New South Wales ranked at number 54, and University of Melbourne at 76. Macquarie University ranks at number 49. No RUN member institution is ranked.

At the same time as rankings, accreditations such as the Association of Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the Association of MBAs (AMBA), and European Foundation for Management Development Quality Improvement System (EQUIS) are sort after accreditations in the increasingly competitive higher education market (EFMD, 2018). In Australia, AACSB accreditation has been awarded to Bond University, Curtin University, Deakin University, Griffith University, Macquarie Graduate School of Management, Monash Business School, Queensland University of Technology, University of Adelaide, University of Melbourne, University of Newcastle, University of Queensland, University of Sydney, University of Technology Sydney, University of Western Australia and University of New South Wales, but alas, no RUN member institution (AACSB, 2018). AMBA has been awarded to only Monash Business School and the Queensland University of Technology School of Business. Again, with EQUIS accreditation, no RUN institution has been awarded accreditation, but it has been awarded to Bond Business School, University of Melbourne Business School, Monash Business School, Queensland University of Technology Business School, University of Western Australia Business School, University of Queensland Business School, University of South Australia Business School, University of Sydney Business School and University of New South Wales Business School (EQUIS, 2018).

Discipline based accreditations are also worthy of exploration. The Australian Human Resources Institute (AHRI) accredits HRM programs offered at Australian universities (Australian Human Resources Institution, 2018). Among the RUN institutions, Central Queensland University, University of New England and University of Southern Queensland have AHRI accredited programs, while Federation University, Southern Cross University and the University of the Sunshine Coast are not accredited (Australian Human Resources Institute, 2018). The Australian Marketing Institute (AMI) offer a similar provision for marketing programs at Australian universities (Australian Marketing Institute, 2018). The University of Southern Queensland is the

only regional university with a marketing program accredited by AMI. The Chartered Financial Analyst Institute holds partnerships with several Australian universities (Australian National University, Bond University, Curtin University, Griffith University, LaTrobe University, Macquarie University, Monash University, Queensland University of Technology, University of Adelaide, University of Melbourne, University of New South Wales, University of South Australia, University of Sydney, University of Technology Sydney, University of Western Australia, University of Wollongong, Victoria University and Western Sydney University. The Financial Planning Association of Australia (FPAA) has approved degrees from three of the six RUN providers: Central Queensland University, University of New England and University of the Sunshine Coast. The Australian Property Institute (API) has accredited the undergraduate property programs offered at Central Queensland University and the University of Sunshine Coast. The Global Alliance in Management Education (CEMS) is a cooperation of leading business schools across the world, which lists the University of Sydney as its only Australian affiliate. All RUN institutions offer programs which lead to professional membership with Certified Practicing Accountants Australia, the Institution of Chartered Accountants and the Institute of Public Accountants. The law degrees offered at the RUN institutions are all accredited as required by the state in which they principally operate. The non-certification of (in particular) programs in HRM, marketing and finance offered at RUN institutions may be reflective of either a lack of interest or value being placed in that accreditation, a lack of resources to support applying for accreditation, or failed application for accreditation.

In of the key measures of university performance used by the Australian Government's, the Excellence in Research Australia (ERA), RUN continue to see bleak results. Five scores of '5' were awarded in ERA rankings for the subject field '18 – Law', all to Go8 universities. Meanwhile, two RUN member institutions (University of New England and University of Southern Queensland) achieved a score of '2'. A similar story exists in the subject field '15 – Management'. Only three scores of '5' were awarded here, and attributed to University of Melbourne, University of New South Wales and University of Queensland. Federation University Australia, Southern Cross University, University of the Sunshine Coast and University of Southern Queensland each achieved a score of '2', while Central Queensland University and University of New England achieved only a score of '1'.

Despite disappointing results in rankings and limited accreditations, RUN institutions perform well in the Australian Government's Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching (QILT). An in-depth analysis of recent QILT results indicate that the RUN institutions, on average, outperform the national average in many criteria. The percentages provided are the proportion of students who indicated a positive rating for that criteria. In Student Experience surveys:

- Undergraduate overall student experience (80.97 per cent, compared with national average of 79.90 per cent).
- Undergraduate law student experience (82.78 per cent, compared with national average of 80.90 per cent)
- Undergraduate business student (80.35 per cent, compared with national average of 76.90 per cent)
- Undergraduate overall teaching (82.25 per cent, compared with national average of 81.50 per cent)
- Undergraduate law teaching (85.02 per cent, compared with national average of 82.70 per cent)
- Undergraduate business teaching (76.90 per cent, compared with national average of 77.30 per cent)
- Undergraduate law learning resources (87.63 per cent compared with national average of 85.00 per cent)
- Undergraduate business learning resources (85.10 per cent compared with national average of 83.60 per cent)
- Undergraduate overall student support (77.18 per cent, compared with the national average of 72.00 per cent)
- Undergraduate law student support (76.60 per cent, compared with the national average of 70.20 per cent)
- Undergraduate business student support (74.38 per cent, compared with the national average of 69.60 per cent)

Overall, and in both business and law, undergraduate learner engagement was lower than national average:

- Undergraduate overall learner engagement (62.80 per cent, compared with national average of 64.20 per cent)

- Undergraduate law learner engagement (56.23 per cent, compared with national average of 59.80 per cent)
- Undergraduate business learner engagement (57.10 per cent, compared with national average of 61.50 per cent)

Despite performing above the national average in both undergraduate law and business learning resources, the overall undergraduate learning resources score was lower than the national average:

- Undergraduate overall learning resources (82.85, compared with national average of 85.20)

In skills development, the RUN institutions fell behind the national average:

- Undergraduate overall skills development (81.02 per cent, compared with national average of 81.20per cent)
- Undergraduate law skills development (82.10 per cent, compared with national average of 83.40per cent)
- Undergraduate business skills development (76.55 per cent, compared with national average of 77.20per cent)

In graduate satisfaction, RUN institutions continue to outperform the national average in many criteria:

- Undergraduate overall graduate satisfaction (82.83 per cent, compared with the national average of 82.20 per cent)
- Undergraduate law graduate satisfaction (88.26 per cent, compared with the national average of 83.40 per cent)
- Undergraduate business graduate satisfaction (85.00 per cent, compared with the national average of 81.60 per cent)
- Postgraduate overall graduate satisfaction (83.37 per cent, compared with the national average of 83.00 per cent)
- Postgraduate law graduate satisfaction (95.00 per cent, compared with the national average of 83.60 per cent)

- Postgraduate business graduate satisfaction (86.07 per cent, compared with the national average of 84.00 per cent)
- Undergraduate teaching overall (71.00 per cent, compared with the national average of 68.00 per cent)
- Undergraduate law teaching (65.52 per cent, compared with the national average of 61.60 per cent)
- Undergraduate business teaching (68.77 per cent, compared with the national average of 64.20 per cent)
- Postgraduate teaching overall (72.50 per cent, compared with the national average of 71.80 per cent)
- Postgraduate law teaching (75.00 per cent, compared with the national average of 70.80 per cent)

In postgraduate business teaching, the RUN institution average is lower than the national average (70.53 per cent, compared with 71.40 per cent).

Reflecting the lower scores for skills development in the Student Experience, the Graduate Satisfaction scores indicate the RUN institutions are deficient in this area. While achieving above the national average in undergraduate law skill development (86.52 per cent compared with 85.70 per cent), undergraduate business skill development (82.62 per cent compared with 82.20 per cent) and a large margin in postgraduate law skill development (97.50 per cent compared with 77.50 per cent), postgraduate business skill development yielded only 81.88 per cent (compared with 82.30 per cent), postgraduate overall 78.18 per cent (compared with 79.70 per cent) and undergraduate overall skill development (83.55 per cent, compared with the national average of 84.10 per cent) fell short.

While it is conceivable that skill development is an antecedent of employability, and the employment rates of regional areas (detailed in sections 3.3 to 3.8) may lead to concerns regarding employment, the full time employment rates are quite reassuring. The RUN institutions averaged 80.00 per cent for full time employment, significantly higher than the national average of 73.10 per cent, while the undergraduate overall rate was 73.30 per cent, 3.80 per cent above the national average of 69.50 per cent. Admittedly, undergraduate law (66.38 per cent, compared with the

national average of 74.70 per cent), postgraduate law (83.80 per cent, compared with the national average of 85.10 per cent,) postgraduate business (88.90 per cent, compared with 89.10) and postgraduate overall (82.65 per cent, compared with the national average of 83.50 per cent) were below the national average. However, 38.94 per cent (compared with the national average of 20.60) of undergraduate law students, 21.10 per cent (compared with 6.60 per cent) of postgraduate law students, and 5.42 per cent (compared with 4.70) of postgraduate business students were engaged in full time study. In undergraduate business, 7.97 per cent (compared with the national average of 11.70 per cent) were engaged in full time study, as were 13.30 per cent (compared with the national average of 21.60 per cent) of all undergraduates, and 5.00 per cent (compared with the national average of 6.20 per cent) of all postgraduates.

The median salaries of graduates were higher for graduates from RUN universities than the national average for undergraduate law ($6,5033.33, compared with the national average of $60,000), undergraduate business ($56,366.67, compared with the national average of $53,000), undergraduate overall ($57,916.67, compared with the national average of $56,000), and postgraduate overall ($81,383.33, compared with the national average of $80,000). The postgraduate business median salary was lower for RUN graduates ($97,333.33, compared with the national average of $100,000).

As we have examined the ranking of Australian universities based on primarily research based systems, it is interesting to conduct comparison with teaching outcomes. The QILT provides two measures of teaching quality, the Student Experience data and the Graduate Experience data. Analysis of this data has revealed that the top 5 business schools in Australia, for undergraduate teaching, according to the student experience data, are:

1. Bond University (90.60 per cent)
2. Edith Cowan University (88.60 per cent)
3. University of the Sunshine Coast (85.90 per cent)
4. Charles Sturt University (84.30 per cent)
   University of Notre Dame (84.30 per cent)

The lowest five included two G08 universities, 2 IRU and an ATN university:

36. RMIT University (73.70 per cent)

37. Australian National University (74.20 per cent)
38. James Cook University (72.30 per cent)
39. University of New South Wales (71.70 per cent)
40. La Trobe University (71.30 per cent)

Analysis of this data has revealed that the top 5 business schools in Australia, for undergraduate teaching, according to the graduate satisfaction data, are:

1. Bond University (89.90 per cent)
2. University of Notre Dame (83.80 per cent)
3. Federation University (75.10 per cent)
4. University of the Sunshine Coast (74.10 per cent)
5. Edith Cowan University (73.70 per cent)

Four of the five lowest scores in this criterion were Go8 universities:

36. University of Adelaide (49.30 per cent)
37. University of Tasmania (49.10 per cent)
38. Australian National University (45.20 per cent)
    University of New South Wales (45.20 per cent)
40. University of Western Australia (44.20 per cent)

The top 5 business schools for postgraduate teaching, according to the graduate satisfaction data, are:

1. Bond University (79.10 per cent)
2. Sunshine Coast University (78.70 per cent)
3. Flinders University (78.20 per cent)
4. University of New England (76.70 per cent)
5. Australian National University (75.40 per cent)

The five lowest scores in this criterion were:

36. Victoria University (66.20 per cent)
37. James Cook University (60.10 per cent)

38. University of Southern Queensland (55.20 per cent)
39. Charles Darwin University (53.40 per cent)
40. La Trobe University (52.40 per cent)

The following presents findings of data pertaining to law and paralegal studies at Australia's universities. Note that some universities in Australia do not provide programs in law at either postgraduate or undergraduate level, while for others the law program is in its infancy. Low numbers were reported for many universities in the data analysed.

The top five law schools in Australia, for undergraduate teaching, according to the student experience data, are:

1. Swinburne University of Technology (92.30 per cent)
2. Edith Cowan University (91.70 per cent)
3. University of Notre Dame (91.40 per cent)
4. Curtin University (91.30 per cent)
5. Bond University (90.00 per cent)

The lowest five returns were:

35. Monash University (77.10 per cent)
36. La Trobe University (76.90 per cent)
37. Murdoch University (76.20 per cent)
38. University of Western Australia (67.80 per cent)
39. Charles Sturt University (66.00 per cent)

The data reveals that the top 5 law schools in Australia, for undergraduate teaching, according to the graduate satisfaction data, are:

1. University of the Sunshine Coast (84.60 per cent)
2. Bond University (78.60 per cent)
3. University of Wollongong (77.30 per cent)
4. University of New South Wales (72.80 per cent)
5. University of Technology Sydney (71.60 per cent)

Yielding the lowest five results were:

35. Queensland University of Technology (44.00 per cent)
36. University of Adelaide (40.70 per cent)
37. Monash University (40.00 per cent)
38. University of Western Australia (39.70 per cent)
39. University of Queensland (32.10 per cent)

The top 5 law schools for postgraduate teaching, according to the graduate satisfaction data, are:

1. University of Queensland (83.70 per cent)
2. University of Tasmania (83.30 per cent)
3. Curtin University (79.30 per cent)
4. Queensland University of Technology (76.70 per cent)
5. University of Canberra (75.70 per cent)

Evidently, the QILT data, designed to compare student experience, differs greatly to the outcomes of ranking data, with RUN institutions moving from the shadows to the spotlight.

Another mechanism by which universities can be compared is their capacity to attract research funding. Codling and Meek (2006) emphasise that research funding allocated by government to universities is used as a source of comparison. The Australian Government has disseminated $114,806,103,535 in research funding from 2004 to 2016, including Category 1 – Australian Competitive Grants, Category 2 – Other Public Sector Research Funding, Category 3 – Industry and Other Funding for Research and Category 4 – Cooperative Research Centre Funding (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). Of this funding, $208,676,609 (0.18 per cent) has been awarded to the University of the Sunshine Coast, $869,379,594 (0.76 per cent) to the University of New England, $421,180,686 (0.37 per cent) to Southern Cross University, $305,254,301 (0.27 per cent) to the University of Southern Queensland, $276,088,935 (0.24 per cent) to Central Queensland University, and $183,053,580 to Federation University (0.16 per cent) (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). In the view of Codling and Meek (2006, p. 43), the discrepancy between the funding awarded to research intensive universities and others inevitably encourages "poorly funded lowly-ranked universities to emulate

the research performance of those higher on the ranking ladder in order to increase their research income." The result is increased convergence in practice and reduced differentiation of mission.

Globally, the higher education industry has been labelled as tumultuous, where universities are drawn between scholarly and economic endeavours (Kinser and Hill, 2011), perhaps no more so than Australia's regional universities, who struggle between scholarly and economic endeavours, but also their mission to support the prosperity of their regional community amidst changed priorities in government funding and policy. To interpret these competing priorities, it is first logically to understand the context of Australia's university sector.

3.1 Australia's Regional Universities

Currently, over 130,000 tertiary students are enrolled with a RUN institution (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). Approximately nine per cent of Australia's higher education students (115,000 students) are affiliated with a RUN institution (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). The RUN universities have combined assets over $3.6 billion, an annual revenue of $1.7 billion and employee over 7300 staff (Regional Universities Network, 2017). The value of regional universities to their region is significant, and their success valued.

Since the 1990s, Australian universities have relied increasingly on international students as a source of funding (Zammuto, 2008). In 2017, of the $28.7 billion revenue for Australia's universities, 19 per cent was from higher education international students (Australian Government Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency, 2017). While these international students are less likely to consider study at a regional campus rather than a metropolitan campus (Edgeworth and Eiseman, 2007; Forbes and Hamilton, 2004), RUN institutions have adopted the strategy of opening metropolitan campuses primarily to service an international cohort. Of the 24,715 Management and Commerce students at RUN institutions in 2016, 11,678 (or 47.2 per cent) were international, while of the 20,802 international students enrolled at RUN institutions in 2016, 11,678 (56.1 per cent) were enrolled in Management and Commerce programs (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). Regional universities are heavily reliant on international students, who are typically full-fee paying.

In 2006, Miles, Marshall, Rolfe and Noonan (2006) flagged concern for net migration from regional Australia to coastal and metropolitan areas. However, in 2013, the RUN indicated that, "despite common misconceptions, the population in regional Australia is rising". However, climate, access to services and employment and reputation conspire against the regional university endeavouring to attract talent. Unfortunately for regional universities, metrocentric thinking is compounded by media stories which expose regional Australia as a cauldron of natural disasters and extreme weather events (Collits, 2012). Collits (2012) explains that the lack of services in regional areas is exaggerated, but so too are the opportunities, which ultimately leaves recent movers disenfranchised and disappointed. As Becker, Hyland and Soosay (2013) suggest, "skills shortages […] impinge on the competitiveness of regionals due to the lack of services and amenities available", and "many organisations in such regions face challenges in recruiting skilled labour". McKenzie (2003) identified the following key reasons for professional skills shortages in the regions:

- Rapidly expanding industries;
- Limited infrastructure or services;
- Less diverse culture, activities or lifestyle;
- Limited professional development;
- Variable of seasonal demand for skills; and
- Low supply of trained staff.

While in some areas, high unemployment plagues local community, not all regions suffer the same fate (Collits, 2012). High unemployment or lesser job opportunities will likely act as a disincentive for dual career couples, where finding roles for both individuals may be difficult. Along with access to services and the presence of community, the reputation or status of a university is likely a major decider of destination for the potential labour and student market, but Australia's regional institutions do not share the same standing as options available in metropolitan areas.

RUN (2018) indicate, "Through their teaching and learning, research and innovation, and regional development and service functions, regional universities make a fundamental contribution to regional Australia and the 30 per cent of Australians who live there. The Regional Australia Institute (2014) proposes that those regions with a "well-educated workforce and a propensity

towards lifelong learning – are expected to experience higher levels of economic growth, are more adaptive and innovative and are more resilient to negative outside influences." Becker et al (2013) explain that regional attractiveness is depleted by limited capital investment and infrastructure improvement, cultural and social amenities, and the reality that while talented potential employees are mobile, their choice of location is limited to a select range of locations. As Professor Greg Hill, the Chair of RUN (Regional Universities Network, 2018) recently said, "Regional universities hold the key to unlocking a new future for regional Australians, helping create new businesses and a re-skilled workforce".

The following sections provide a brief overview of the RUN institution studied as part of this thesis. Central Queensland University, Federation University, Southern Cross University, University of New England, University of Southern Queensland and the University of the Sunshine Coast.

3.1.1 Central Queensland University

Central Queensland University was founded in Rockhampton in 1967 as the Queensland Institute of Technology (QIT) Capricornia (Central Queensland University, 2018). In 1971, it transformed into the Capricornia Institute of Advanced Education (CIAE) (Central Queensland University, 2018). In 1974, it pioneered distance education (Central Queensland University, 2018). New campuses were added in Gladstone (1978), Mackay (1987), Bundaberg (1988) and Emerald (1989) (Central Queensland University, 2018). In 1990, the CIAE was renamed the University College of Central Queensland, and in 1992 was given full university status (Central Queensland University, 2018). In 1994, the name was changed to Central Queensland University (Central Queensland University, 2018).

Central Queensland University has been a pioneer in international education in Australia. As early as 1986, the ten CIAE established international ventures in Singapore, Hong Kong and Fiji (Central Queensland University, 2018). In the same year as being granted university status, Central Queensland University partnered with C Management Services to open a metropolitan campus in Sydney, followed by Melbourne in 1997, Brisbane in 1998, and the Gold Coast in 2001(Central Queensland University, 2018). A Noosa campus, operated by the university, was also opened in 2001 (Central Queensland University, 2018). In 2008, the university took ownership of C Management Services (Central Queensland University, 2018).

In 2011, the university entered into partnership with the Geraldton Universities Centre in Western Australia (Central Queensland University, 2018). In 2012, the university opened campuses in Cairns and Adelaide, followed by locations in Cannonvale in 2013, Townsville, Charters Towers, Perth and Karratha in 2014 (Central Queensland University, 2018). In 2014, the university merged with Central Queensland Technical and Further Education (TAFE) (Central Queensland University, 2018).

Today, the university has over 30000 students enrolled across 25 locations around Australia (Central Queensland University, 2018). Fully fledged campuses operate in metropolitan Adelaide, Brisbane, Melbourne, Perth and Sydney. University centres, study centres, or study hubs operate in Biloela, Broome, Busselton, Karratha, Yeppoon, Cooma and Geraldton. There are regional campus locations in Bundaberg, Cairns, Emerald, Gladstone, Mackay, Rockhampton and Townsville.

3.1.2 Federation University

Federation University is Australia's "first regional, multi-sector university and are the third oldest site of higher learning in Australia", tracing its history back to 1870 (Federation University, 2018). Initially established the School of Mines Ballarat, its affiliation with the University of Melbourne began in 1887 (Federation University, 2018). It was granted university status in 1994, under sponsorship of the University of Melbourne for the first five years, and incorporated previous iterations including the Ballarat Base Hospital School of Nursing, Ballarat Teachers College, State College of Victoria, Ballarat School of Industries, Ballarat Technical School, Ballarat Institute of Advanced Education and Ballarat College of Advanced Operations (Federation University, 2018). In 1998, the Wimmera Institute of TAFE component was added to the university, with its history going back to 1891 with the Horsham Working Men's College, and later the Horsham Technical School, Ararat Technical School, Stawell School of Design, Stawell School of Mines, Stawell Junior Technical School, Stawell Technical School (Federation University, 2018).

Federation University is the product of amalgamation of the former University of Ballarat and the Monash University Gippsland Campus (Federation University, 2018). Monash University Gippsland had previously operated as the Monash University College, Gippsland Institute of

Advanced Education, Yallourn Technical College, and earlier Yallourn Technical School (Federation University, 2018).

Federation University currently hosts around 20,000 international and domestic students across its regional campuses in Ballarat, Churchill, Wimmera (in Horshim), an outer metropolitan campus in Berwick, and metropolitan campus in Brisbane and its support centre in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. (Federation University, 2018).

3.1.3 Southern Cross University

Southern Cross is only 23 years of age (Southern Cross University, 2018). Originally operating as a Teachers College in the 1970s, in 1989, the Northern Rivers College of Advanced Education became a formal network member of the University of New England (Southern Cross University, 2018). In 1992, the University of New England network was dismantled, and by 1994 Southern Cross University was granted university status in 1994 (Southern Cross University, 2018).

The university currently operates a metropolitan campus at the Gold Coast, and offers degrees in collaboration with the company EduCo in Sydney, Melbourne and Perth (Southern Cross University, 2018). The Hotel School Sydney and Hotel School Melbourne operate as a partnership between Southern Cross University and Mulpha Australia (Southern Cross University, 2018). The university operated regional campuses in Coffs Harbour and Lismore (Southern Cross University, 2018).

3.1.4 University of New England

The University of New England had its origins in the aspirations of David Henry Drummond, to establish "'another Cambridge or Oxford on a sheep station" (University of New England, 2018). Beginning as an Armidale Teachers' College in 1929, Drummond led the campaign to establish a 'northern university' in the New England region (University of New England, 2018). In 1936, Thomas Richard Forster, inspired by the vision of David Henry Drummond, purchased the iconic Booloominbah mansion which he gave to the University of Sydney to use "as a University College for all of Australia" (University of New England, 2018). On 1 January 1938, New England University College, part of the University of Sydney, dubbed the 'university of the north' was born. Sixteen years later, in 1954, it began operating independently as the University of New England. Between

1989 and 1993, University of New England operated a network of other colleagues, including what was to become Southern Cross University. University of New England was the first university in Australia to introduce distance education.

University of New England operates a metropolitan campus in Sydney, and study centres in Tamworth, Taree, Coonabarabran, Gunnedah, Inverell, Moree, Narrabi, Tenterfield, Glen Innes, Guyra and Comma. The principal regional campus of University of New England is in Armidale.

3.1.5 University of Southern Queensland

The history of the University of Southern Queensland begins in 1967 with the Queensland Institute of Technology (Darling Downs), which transformed to the Darling Downs Institute of Advanced Education in 1971 (University of Southern Queensland, 2018). Under the scope of the University of Queensland, 1990 saw a name change to the University College of Southern Queensland (University of Southern Queensland, 2018). In 1992, the University was granted full university status, and began operating as University of Southern Queensland.

Currently, the university operates campuses at Springfield in outer metropolitan Brisbane and Ipswich (University of Southern Queensland, 2018). In partnership with the Queensland Government, the university operate the Queensland College of Wine Tourism (University of Southern Queensland, 2018). The university operates a study hub at Stanthorpe, while the major regional campus is in Toowoomba.

3.1.6 University of the Sunshine Coast

The University of the Sunshine Coast operates a campus at Southbank in the Brisbane CBD, as well as, a long way from the sandy beaches of Maroochydore, offering degrees (through a partnership with Australian Technical and Management College) in Sydney and Melbourne. The university also operate campuses in Gympie and Caboolture, and study hubs in North Lakes and Noosa. A new campus in Petrie, a northern suburb of Brisbane, in the Moreton Bay council area, will commence operations in 2020. The main regional campus locations for the University of the Sunshine Coast are Sippy Downs (on the Sunshine Coast), and University of Sunshine Coast Fraser Coast in Hervey Bay.

3.2 Regional Campus Locations

Australia's RUN institution campuses sprawl across many regional tows. Table 3.3 shows key data pertaining to these locations. The data reveals that while many locations of RUN regional campuses are plagued by lower median weekly household income, more households with than $650 gross weekly income, lower university participate rates, lower percentages of the population holding a bachelor level degree or above and a higher unemployment rate, there are exceptions. The percentage of people employed in each occupation at each location (see Table 3.4) as well as the predominate industry (see Tables 3.5 through to 3.18) also provides interest insights into the location, with many regional campus locations hosting a large number of labourers, machinery operators and drivers, and technicians and trade workers. Data for Tables 3.5 to 3.18 was collected from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018), and contains data collected from the 2016 Australian Census. The data tends to indicate that in the locations, either the median weekly household income is below the national average and above the national reported unemployment, or a large contingent of the workforce is engaged in technical and trade work, which is related to mining and manufacturing industries. Analysis of the data collected from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2018) reveals that:

- Regional Campus locations are in lower income areas:
    - With the exception of Emerald and Mackay, all RUN regional campus locations are below the Australian median weekly household income.
    - All locations listed, with the exception of Emerald, have more households that earn less than $650 gross weekly income, when compared to the Australian average.
- Employment options in regional centres may be limited:
    - Compared to the Australian unemployment rate of 6.9 per cent, all other locations with the exception of Ballarat (6.8 per cent) Emerald (5.6 per cent) and Horsham (5.3 per cent) are above this rate. For these exceptions:
        - Emerald's rate of professionals is 13.6 per cent which is 8.6 per cent lower than the Australian rate of 22.2 per cent. The rate of Technicians and Trade Workers in Emerald is 19 per cent which is 5.5 per cent higher than the Australian rate of 13.5 per cent. Likewise, the rate of Machinery Operators and Drivers in Emerald is 15.8 per cent which is a whopping 9.5 per cent higher than the Australian rate of 6.3 per cent. Essentially meaning if you

are a machinery operator or driver or a technician or trade worker then you have more of a chance of getting a job than if you were a professional.

    - Of the employed people in Emerald and Mackay, 17.6 per cent and 10.6 per cent respectively work in Coal Mining – most likely increasing the median weekly household income. Reflecting the prevalence of both the high income earners in these areas, these three locations are the only locations (with the exception of Sunshine Coast) where the median monthly mortgage repayments are above the Australian median monthly mortgage repayments.

- There is limited cultural diversity in regional areas:
    - All locations are well below the Australian average (22.2 per cent) of households where non-English language is spoken. The locations that are below, range from 8.8 per cent right through to 18.6 per cent below the Australian average of 22.2 per cent.
- There is less university qualified people in regional areas:
    - With the exception of Armidale, the proportion of professionals and those holding a Bachelor Degree level qualification and above in all other locations is below the Australian average. As well as having a higher than average proportion of the population holding a university qualification, it is noted that Armidale is largely dependent on its university (University of New England), with 12.2 per cent of the workforce working in higher education.
- Mortgages are less in regional areas:
    - With the exception of Emerald and Mackay, median monthly mortgage repayments were less than the national average. The median weekly household income is higher than the national average in these locations. This is likely linked with the prevalence of coal mining occupations in Emerald and Mackay.

Table 3-3 Regional Data

Location	Population	Median Age	Median Weekly Household Income	Less than $650 gross weekly income	% of Population Studying at University or Tertiary Institution	% holding a Bachelor Degree level qualification and above	% Households where a non English language is spoken	Reported Unemployment	Median monthly mortgage repayments
Australia-wide	23,401,886	38	$1,438	20%	16.1%	22.0%	22.2%	6.9%	$1,755
Armidale	23,352	34	$1,201	24.5%	32.0%	25.8%	9.5%	8.3%	$1,393
Ballarat	157,485	42	$1,098	26.3%	13.3%	17.0%	6.2%	6.8%	$1,300
Bundaberg	43,702	42	$923	30.8%	8.5%	8.8%	6.6%	11.6%	$1,300
Cairns	240,190	39	$1,226	22.6%	8.6%	14.3%	13.4%	7.8%	$1,597
Churchill	11,401	42	$1,265	23.1%	14.1%	13.8%	6.6%	8.6%	$1,300
Coffs Harbour	86,021	44	$1,086	25.7%	7.7%	15.3%	7.7%	7.3%	$1,560
Emerald	13,532	31	$1,884	11.6%	5.5%	12.6%	7.8%	5.6%	$2,000
Hervey Bay	56,678	48	$926	28.7%	7.3%	10.6%	6.1%	11.7%	$1,500
Horsham	16250	41	$1102	26.5%	6.8%	13.0%	5.3%	5.3%	
Lismore	15,280	41	$957	32.5%	17.3%	16.4%	6.5%	10.2%	$1,300
Mackay	114,969	37	$1,456	20.2%	8.4%	10.6%	7.3%	8.6%	$1,950
Rockhampton	116,000	38	$1,268	22.8%	10.1%	12.0%	5.9%	8.8%	$1,625
Sunshine Coast	346,522	44	$1,260	21.2%	12.9%	17.1%	7.1%	7.1%	$1,777
Toowoomba	149,512	37	$1298	20.5%	14.2%	17.1%	8.0%	7.0%	$1560

Table 3-4 Regional Data on Type of Professions

Location	% Professionals	% Clerical and Administrative Workers	% Technicians and Trade Workers	% Managers	% Sales Workers	% Community and Personal Service Workers	% Labourers	% Machinery Operators and Drivers
Australia-wide	22.2	13.6	13.5	13	9.4	10.8	9.5	6.3
Armidale	26.4	12.8	11.1	11.1	10.5	12.5	10.7	3.8
Ballarat	19.6	12.1	15.0	12.5	9.9	12.2	11.2	5.9
Bundaberg	14.5	12.2	14.0	8.8	11.6	12.7	16.7	7.7
Cairns	17.3	12.4	14.7	12.2	10.2	13.2	12.0	6.2
Churchill	15.4	13.1	18.3	11.4	10.1	10.9	10.6	8.2
Coffs Harbour	19.1	12.6	13.6	12.3	10.4	12.3	12.5	5.5
Emerald	13.6	12.5	19	9.7	10.4	7.6	10.0	15.8
Hervey Bay	18.2	11.3	14.4	9.5	11.9	15.4	11.9	6
Horsham	18.3	12.2	14.5	12.7	12.2	11.9	10.9	5.8
Lismore	19.2	11.7	13.8	8.0	11.0	14.8	14.5	5.5
Mackay	14.3	12.0	20.0	10.5	9.2	8.8	10.6	12.9
Rockhampton	15.9	13.0	17.0	9.9	9.6	12.1	11.8	9.4
Sunshine Coast	19.1	12.7	16.1	11.9	11.2	12.2	10.4	4.9
Toowoomba	19.6	13.7	15.1	10.8	9.5	11.4	12.1	6.5

Table 3-5 Industry of employment, top responses - Armidale

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Armidale	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
Higher Education	1,166	12.2	46,246	1.4	155,985	1.5
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	337	3.5	119,350	3.5	411,808	3.9
Combined Primary and Secondary Education	303	3.2	34,152	1.0	122,286	1.1
Other Social Assistance Services	300	3.1	54,259	1.6	158,230	1.5
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	282	3.0	74,487	2.2	254,275	2.4

Of the employed people in Armidale (State Suburbs), 12.2% worked in Higher Education. Other major industries of employment included Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) 3.5%, Combined Primary and Secondary Education 3.2%, Other Social Assistance Services 3.1% and Supermarket and Grocery Stores 3.0%.

Table 3-6 Industry of employment, top responses - Ballarat

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Ballarat	%	Victoria	%	Australia	%
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	4,279	6.4	110,827	4.1	411,808	3.9
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	1,802	2.7	65,341	2.4	254,275	2.4
Primary Education	1,738	2.6	52,964	1.9	231,198	2.2
Takeaway Food Services	1,524	2.3	48,051	1.8	189,447	1.8
Cafes and Restaurants	1,452	2.2	69,149	2.5	253,385	2.4

Of the employed people in Ballarat (Statistical Area Level 4), 6.4% worked in Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals). Other major industries of employment included Supermarket and Grocery Stores 2.7%, Primary Education 2.6%, Takeaway Food Services 2.3% and Cafes and Restaurants 2.2%.

Table 3-7 Industry of employment, top responses - Bundaberg

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Bundaberg	%	Queensland	%	Australia	%

Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	857	5.6	91,756	4.3	411,808	3.9
Aged Care Residential Services	529	3.4	40,967	1.9	211,621	2.0
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	520	3.4	52,291	2.4	254,275	2.4
Primary Education	500	3.2	54,394	2.5	231,198	2.2
Secondary Education	451	2.9	36,640	1.7	177,487	1.7

Of the employed people in Bundaberg (State Electoral Divisions), 5.6% worked in Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals). Other major industries of employment included Aged Care Residential Services 3.4%, Supermarket and Grocery Stores 3.4%, Primary Education 3.2% and Secondary Education 2.9%.

Table 3-8 Industry of employment, top responses - Cairns

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Cairns	%	Queensland	%	Australia	%
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	5,182	4.9	91,756	4.3	411,808	3.9
Accommodation	3,751	3.5	29,602	1.4	113,377	1.1
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	2,861	2.7	52,291	2.4	254,275	2.4
Primary Education	2,828	2.7	54,394	2.5	231,198	2.2
Cafes and Restaurants	2,634	2.5	49,488	2.3	253,385	2.4

Of the employed people in Cairns (Statistical Area Level 4), 4.9% worked in Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals). Other major industries of employment included Accommodation 3.5%, Supermarket and Grocery Stores 2.7%, Primary Education 2.7% and Cafes and Restaurants 2.5%.

Table 3-9 Industry of employment, top responses - Churchill

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Churchill	%	Victoria	%	Australia	%
Fossil Fuel Electricity Generation	268	5.6	1,882	0.1	8,064	0.1
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	216	4.5	110,827	4.1	411,808	3.9
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	159	3.3	65,341	2.4	254,275	2.4
Primary Education	154	3.2	52,964	1.9	231,198	2.2
Takeaway Food Services	135	2.8	48,051	1.8	189,447	1.8

Of the employed people in Churchill (Statistical Area Level 2), 5.6% worked in Fossil Fuel Electricity Generation. Other major industries of employment included Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) 4.5%, Supermarket and Grocery Stores 3.3%, Primary Education 3.2% and Takeaway Food Services 2.8%.

Table 3-10 Industry of employment, top responses - Coffs Harbour

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Coffs Harbour	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	1,632	4.7	119,350	3.5	411,808	3.9
Aged Care Residential Services	1,062	3.1	67,209	2.0	211,621	2.0
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	1,024	3.0	74,487	2.2	254,275	2.4
Primary Education	933	2.7	65,204	1.9	231,198	2.2
Cafes and Restaurants	898	2.6	80,552	2.4	253,385	2.4

Of the employed people in Coffs Harbour (Statistical Area Level 3), 4.7% worked in Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals). Other major industries of employment included Aged Care Residential Services 3.1%, Supermarket and Grocery Stores 3.0%, Primary Education 2.7% and Cafes and Restaurants 2.6%.

Table 3-11 Industry of employment, top responses - Emerald

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Emerald	%	Queensland	%	Australia	%
Coal Mining	1,148	17.6	24,967	1.2	46,491	0.4
Primary Education	248	3.8	54,394	2.5	231,198	2.2
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	237	3.6	52,291	2.4	254,275	2.4
Secondary Education	162	2.5	36,640	1.7	177,487	1.7
Takeaway Food Services	144	2.2	41,958	2.0	189,447	1.8

Of the employed people in Emerald (Urban Centres and Localities), 17.6% worked in Coal Mining. Other major industries of employment included Primary Education 3.8%, Supermarket and Grocery Stores 3.6%, Secondary Education 2.5% and Takeaway Food Services 2.2%.

Table 3-12 Industry of employment, top responses - Hervey Bay

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Hervey Bay	%	Queensland	%	Australia	%
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	1,065	5.8	91,756	4.3	411,808	3.9
Aged Care Residential Services	731	4.0	40,967	1.9	211,621	2.0
Primary Education	663	3.6	54,394	2.5	231,198	2.2
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	640	3.5	52,291	2.4	254,275	2.4
Other Social Assistance Services	557	3.0	30,196	1.4	158,230	1.5

Of the employed people in Hervey Bay (Statistical Area Level 3), 5.8% worked in Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals). Other major industries of employment included Aged Care Residential Services 4.0%, Primary Education 3.6%, Supermarket and Grocery Stores 3.5% and Other Social Assistance Services 3.0%.

Table 3-13 Industry of employment, top responses - Horsham

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Horsham	%	Victoria	%	Australia	%
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	583	8.0	110,827	4.1	411,808	3.9
Other Social Assistance Services	224	3.1	36,319	1.3	158,230	1.5
Primary Education	198	2.7	52,964	1.9	231,198	2.2
Takeaway Food Services	189	2.6	48,051	1.8	189,447	1.8
Local Government Administration	185	2.5	38,163	1.4	142,724	1.3

Of the employed people in Horsham (Statistical Area Level 2), 8.0% worked in Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals). Other major industries of employment included Other Social Assistance Services 3.1%, Primary Education 2.7%, Takeaway Food Services 2.6% and Local Government Administration 2.5%.

View the data quality statement for Industry of employment (INDP)

Table 3-14 Industry of employment, top responses - Lismore

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Lismore	%	New South Wales	%	Australia	%

Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	348	5.9	119,350	3.5	411,808	3.9
Other Social Assistance Services	259	4.4	54,259	1.6	158,230	1.5
Aged Care Residential Services	197	3.3	67,209	2.0	211,621	2.0
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	191	3.2	74,487	2.2	254,275	2.4
Higher Education	164	2.8	46,246	1.4	155,985	1.5

Of the employed people in Lismore (Statistical Area Level 2), 5.9% worked in Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals). Other major industries of employment included Other Social Assistance Services 4.4%, Aged Care Residential Services 3.3%, Supermarket and Grocery Stores 3.2% and Higher Education 2.8%.

Table 3-15 Industry of employment, top responses - Mackay

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Mackay	%	Queensland	%	Australia	%
Coal Mining	5,564	10.6	24,967	1.2	46,491	0.4
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	1,928	3.7	91,756	4.3	411,808	3.9
Primary Education	1,558	3.0	54,394	2.5	231,198	2.2
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	1,385	2.6	52,291	2.4	254,275	2.4
Sugar Cane Growing	1,086	2.1	4,546	0.2	4,936	0.0

Of the employed people in Mackay (Statistical Area Level 3), 10.6% worked in Coal Mining. Other major industries of employment included Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) 3.7%, Primary Education 3.0%, Supermarket and Grocery Stores 2.6% and Sugar Cane Growing 2.1%.

Table 3-16 Industry of employment, top responses - Rockhampton

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Rockhampton	%	Queensland	%	Australia	%
Coal Mining	2,508	5.1	24,967	1.2	46,491	0.4
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	2,371	4.8	91,756	4.3	411,808	3.9
Primary Education	1,430	2.9	54,394	2.5	231,198	2.2
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	1,309	2.6	52,291	2.4	254,275	2.4
Secondary Education	1,244	2.5	36,640	1.7	177,487	1.7

Of the employed people in Rockhampton (Statistical Area Level 3), 5.1% worked in Coal Mining. Other major industries of employment included Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals) 4.8%, Primary Education 2.9%, Supermarket and Grocery Stores 2.6% and Secondary Education 2.5%.

Table 3-17 Industry of employment, top responses - Sunshine Coast

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Sunshine Coast	%	Queensland	%	Australia	%
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	6,430	4.2	91,756	4.3	411,808	3.9
Cafes and Restaurants	4,995	3.3	49,488	2.3	253,385	2.4
Aged Care Residential Services	4,027	2.7	40,967	1.9	211,621	2.0
Supermarket and Grocery Stores	4,024	2.7	52,291	2.4	254,275	2.4
Primary Education	3,650	2.4	54,394	2.5	231,198	2.2

Of the employed people in Sunshine Coast (Statistical Area Level 4), 4.2% worked in Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals). Other major industries of employment included Cafes and Restaurants 3.3%, Aged Care Residential Services 2.7%, Supermarket and Grocery Stores 2.7% and Primary Education 2.4%.

Table 3-18 Industry of employment, top responses - Toowoomba

Industry of employment, top responses *Employed people aged 15 years and over*	Toowoomba	%	Queensland	%	Australia	%
Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals)	3,294	5.0	91,756	4.3	411,808	3.9
Primary Education	1,993	3.0	54,394	2.5	231,198	2.2
Secondary Education	1,633	2.5	36,640	1.7	177,487	1.7
Higher Education	1,605	2.4	28,546	1.3	155,985	1.5
Aged Care Residential Services	1,602	2.4	40,967	1.9	211,621	2.0

Of the employed people in Toowoomba (Statistical Area Level 4), 5.0% worked in Hospitals (except Psychiatric Hospitals). Other major industries of employment included Primary Education 3.0%, Secondary Education 2.5%, Higher Education 2.4% and Aged Care Residential Services 2.4%.

Along with these measures of demographic and economic standards, it is interesting to compare the weather patterns in these locations where RUN universities operate. The data reveals that many of these campuses operate in relatively temperate climates, which may be attractive to some respondents. Data for table 3-19 was collected from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (2018), while data for 3.20 was collected from google maps (2018).

Table 3-19 Coldest and Hottest Temperatures in Regional Campus Locations

Location	**Coldest month High/low (°C)**	**Hottest month High/low (°C)**
Armidale	12°/ 0°	26°/ 13°
Ballarat	10°/ 3°	26°/ 12°
Berwick	13°/ 6°	26° /14°
Bundaberg	22° / 11°	31° / 22°
Cairns	26° / 17°	32° / 24°
Churchill	13° / 3°	26° / 12°
Coffs Harbour	19° / 8°	27° / 20°
Emerald	23° / 8°	35° / 22°
Hervey Bay	22° / 10°	30° / 22°
Lismore	20° / 7°	30 / 19°
Mackay	21° / 13°	30° / 24°
Rockhampton	23° / 10°	32° / 23°
Sunshine Coast	21° / 9°	29° / 21°
Toowoomba	17° / 7°	28° /18°
Horsham	14° / 3°	31° / 13°

Determining the lifestyle differences among these campuses is difficult, with most information pertaining to such factors associated with tourism information sources which naturally endeavour to 'sell' the attractiveness of the location. Instead, we can indicate the general location of each of the campuses. It is worth noting that the lower populations in the regional areas is likely associated with less traffic, which is tied to a more relaxed lifestyle. The following tables reveal the region and distance to nearest capital city for each of the RUN institution regional campuses.

Table 3-20 Regional Campus Regions and Distance to Capital City

Location	Region	Distance from campus to nearest capital city
Armidale	Inland, New England, New South Wales	Sydney, 474.5 km
Ballarat	Inland, Central Highlands, Victoria	Melbourne, 115 km
Berwick	Inland, Gippsland, Victoria	Melbourne, 48.2 km
Bundaberg	Coastal, Wide Bay Burnett, Queensland	Brisbane, 359.7 km
Cairns	Coastal, Far North Queensland, Queensland	Brisbane, 1,683.4 km
Churchill	Inland, Gippsland, Victoria	Melbourne, 162.4 km
Coffs Harbour	Coastal, North Coast, New South Wales	Sydney, 522.6 km
Emerald	Inland, Central Queensland, Queensland	Brisbane, 625.3 km
Hervey Bay	Coastal, Wide Bay Burnett, Queensland	Brisbane, 291.9 km
Horsham	Inland, Wimmera Southern Mallee, Victoria	Melbourne, 302 km
Lismore	Inland, Northern Rivers, New South Wales	Brisbane, 211 km
Mackay	Coastal, Central Queensland, Queensland	Brisbane, 952.2 km
Rockhampton	Inland, Central Queensland, Queensland	Brisbane, 625.3 km
Sunshine Coast	Coastal, Sunshine Coast, Queensland	Brisbane, 92.3 km
Toowoomba	Inland, South East Queensland, Queensland	Brisbane, 131.6 km

3.3 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of the higher education sector in Australia, discussed the positioning of Australia's RUN institutions in the mix of competitors and convergence of mission and lack of differentiation within Australia's higher education sector. Brief historical background for each of the RUN institutions has been provided, along with some key attributes of the regional towns in which the principal regional campus locations operate.

This review of literature and analysis of data indicates that regional universities suffer from poor performance in league tables pertaining to research performance, but perform quite well in teaching and learning measures. The section around regional universities discusses the important contribution that regional universities make to their communities and the nation. The background information provided for each of the RUN institutions reveals histories steeped in being a lower tier provider of higher education (as CAEs), which reflects their ongoing relegation to the lower ranks of reputational league tables tied to research.

The regional towns which host the campuses of the RUN providers are briefly discussed, along with statistical profiles pertaining to the economic and demographic situations present in those locations. The data indicates that these regional areas often feature higher levels of reported unemployment, median age, and employment in heavy industry based occupations, along with lower levels of income and diversity, but may provide greater for greater affordability, smaller populations than the national average, and more temperate climate. Importantly, the regional locations were not homogenous, but rather had unique economic, climate and demographic profiles. Unique location traits may be able to be leveraged in the attraction of academic staff.

The literature cited in this chapter, along with the data analysed, supports the proposition that universities may face distinct challenges in their efforts to attract talented academic staff. The competitive nature of the higher education in Australia, funding mechanisms and policy encourage convergence of mission for Australia's universities. The esteem of ranking and reputation, with relatively low positioning of regional universities, may be a deterrent to prospective employees who favour research performance, a research career and reputational aspects pertaining to research. The regional location of RUN institutions may also serve as a deterrent to attractiveness for prospective talent.

4.0 Human Capital in Academia

This chapter explores the concept of strategic HRM in academia, first elaborating on the notion of strategic HRM, and then exploring the resource based view of the firm and university academic human capital. These theoretical frameworks are valuable in this thesis as they provide the foundation which supports the view that the attraction of talented academic staff is of strategic value to the organisation. Emphasis is placed on the alignment between strategy and HRM, and how human capital can be leveraged for organisational success. The implication for this in the higher education sector in Australia is discussed in section 4.3, where the growth and value of the academic workforce is discussed and connections made with the literature discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

4.1 Strategic Human Resource Management

Strategic HRM "focuses on the linking of all HR [human resources] activities with the organisation's strategic objectives" (Stone, 2013, p. 33). When HRM and organisational strategy are aligned, labour productivity and HRM effectiveness is enhanced emphasising the importance of integrating HRM practices and business goals to fully leverage human capital. Buller and McEvoy (2012, p.54) explain that, "HRM objectives are to establish and promote a clear alignment of capabilities at all levels with the firm's strategic goals and to create the culture, norms, motivation and opportunity to engage in actions that contribute to these goals." In the absence of strategic integration, HRM remains an isolated, peripheral, administrative function (Stone, 2013). While strategic HRM involves the incorporates of a range of activities, recruitment and selection represents "the first of the management of human resources towards organisational goals" (Compton, Morrissey and Nankervis, 2014, p.100). Inherent to strategic HRM is the value of employees in the realisation of organisational objectives and to sustainable competitive advantage. This position holds its origins in the resource based view of the firm, which harks back to the 1980s, from when it increased in popularity to now hold a dominant position in strategy (Lockett and Wild, 2014).

4.2 The Resource Based View

The Resource Based View (RBV) of an organisation proposes that "each organisation is a collection of unique resources and capabilities that provides the basis for its strategy and that is primary source of its returns" (Hanson, Dowling, Ireland and Hoskisson, 2008, p.23). It is a primarily internally focussed approach that examines path dependency (the resources at the disposal of managers and leaders shape opportunities) and the heterogeneity of resources (Lockett and Wild, 2014). In 1998, Barney and Wright identified three main sources of competitive advantage for an organisation: physical capital, organisational capital and human capital. In 2008, Grant reframed these as tangible, intangible and human. A sustainable source of competitive advantage must be "valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable" (Wernerfelt, 1984). Therefore, as people are indeed unique, they can be leveraged to develop and sustain competitive advantage (Holland et al, 2007). The RBV is not without its critics. It has been criticised for its failure to consider the turbulent nature of business (Barney, 1991; Evans and Wurster, 2000; Schumpter, 1950; all cited in Holland et al, 2007), but critics fail to consider that people serve as the leaders (and followers) when organisations respond to (or instigate) such change. However, for in excess of fifty years, the likes of Becker (1962), Boxall and Purcell (2011, Wright, Dunford & Snell (2001) and Barney, Wright & Ketchen Jr (2001) have highlighted that managing human capital is integral to the strategic positioning of the organisation.

The shift from an industrial to knowledge based economy has fuelled the global war for talent (Beechler and Woodward, 2009). Ultimately, organisations that fail to respond to the knowledge economy, and do not attract and nurture the right people, may be doomed to stagnate or fail. Boxall and Purcell (2011) stress that firms need to attract, retain and nurture talented staff, as without these individuals, the organisation will fail or growth will be stunted. Establishing competitive advantage through human capital, means attracting the best talent available (Tüzüner and Yüksel 2009). While patent, copyright and industrial espionage laws protect against direct replication of many organisational systems, processes and products, people are truly inimitable and serve as a unique source of competitive advantage (Nankervis, Compton, Baird and Coffey 2011; Holland, Sheehan, De Cieri 2007). Lepak and Snell (1999, 2007) agree that employees serve as highly valuable unique sources of competitive advantage. As such, the value of the human capital is clear. As Williamson, King, Lepak and Sarma (2010) explain, if nothing else, attracting suitably qualified candidates increased the applicant pool size and as such the

likelihood of hiring a competent employee. The most attractive employers yield double the number of applications than their less favoured competitors (Hewitt, 2009), allowing them to be more selective in the acquisition of talent. Holland et al's (2007) discussion of the resource based view of the firm recognises that organisations that invest in employee attraction and retention can become industry leaders. Barney (1991) explain that the RBV prioritises human resources as a source of competitive advantage if the organisation can leverage their HRM practices, and the human resources themselves, to be inimitable, non-substitutable, rare when compared with competitors and able to be utilised to create value through the neutralisation of threats or exploitation of strengths. A key belief of strategic HRM and the resources based view of the firm is that human capital enables the realisation of strategic objectives. Similarly, it suggests that the strategic imperatives of the business should be informed by the human capital at its disposal.

4.3 University Academic Human Capital

For the university, the human capital of the academic staff that teach students, conduct research, and provide service to the community, can be leveraged for strategic value. Samuel and Chipunza (2009) explain that in the knowledge era, skilled knowledge workers offer a competitive advantage fundamental to success. Stahl, Heitmann, Lehmann and Neslin (2012), suggested that this challenge was expected to become more difficult in the years to come. The ageing academic population highlighted in Chapter 2 of this thesis therefore suggests that the attraction of academic human capital is of great importance to Australia's universities.

The sheer amount of academic staff working in Australia's university has, in line with student numbers, grown considerably. In 1949, a mere 31,753 students attended university in Australia (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). In 1988, Dawkins' policy statement on higher education, designed to deliver a more highly skilled and better educated population, with greater equity and access to higher education, led to a major increase in student numbers at Australia's universities. Between 1989 and 1998, the numbers of students studying at university increased by almost 52 per cent, from 441,000 to 672,000 (Dobson, 2001). In 2014, this number had grown from 672,000 to almost 1.4 million. Between 1989 and 1998, international students grew from 21,112 to 72,183, while in 2014 there were 347,560 international students (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2015). According to the Australian Government Department of Education and Training (2015, p.4), "funding for teaching,

learning and research has grown both in absolute and real terms, rising from $3.2 billion in 1989 to $15.4 billion in 2014, more than doubling when adjusted for inflation."

However, reflecting concerns regarding workload and casualisation in Chapter 2 of this thesis, staff numbers have not kept up with the growth in student numbers. In 1997, there were 33,229 full time and fractional full time staff at higher education institutions and 658,849 students enrolled (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017), meaning that there was 1 full time or fractional full time academic for every 19.82 students. In 2016, there were 1,457,209 students enrolled at higher education providers in Australia, and 44,537 full time and fractional full time academic staff, meaning that there is no 1 full time or fractional full time academic for every 32.71 students. At the RUN group, these ratios are more concerning. In 2016, Central Queensland University employed 561 full time and fractional full time staff (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2018) to service 21,702, equating to 1 academic staff member for every 38.68 students. At Federation University, 14,019 students and 389 staff equates to 36 students per academic. For Southern Cross University, there is one full time or fractional full time academic per 47.93 students, while for University of New England there is 40.87 students per academic, University of Southern Queensland 47 students per academic, and University of the Sunshine Coast 34 students per academic. However, the RUN institutions make significant use of sessional academic staff, with the Australian Government Department of Education and Training (2017) indicating that Central Queensland University employ approximately 260 casuals, Federation University 230, Southern Cross University 264, University of New England 200, University of Southern Queensland 318 and University of the Sunshine Coast 255. It is also worth noting that many students are not completing a full time load. Nationwide, only about 30 per cent of students are completing full time studies (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). The student to academic staff to student ratio has grown from 20.05 in 2009 to 21.37 in 2016 (including sessional academics, and adjusted for FTE of both staff and students) (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2017). The increase in academic staff:student ratios may be a contributor to the increasing workloads emphasised by respondents in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

Attraction of talented human capital is a concern in Australia. McKinsey Global Institute (Dobbs, Madgavkar, Barton, Labaye, Manyika, Roxburgh, Lund & Madhav 2012) warns that while the

supply of unskilled labour will surpass 95 million by 2020, a global shortage of skilled workers, to the tune of 40 million is on the cards. New knowledge-economy roles are emerging, and may lure employees to consider a change of role (Collins and Kanar, 2013). For instance, as suggested in the literature discussed in section 2.3, those holding PhD qualifications may seek employment outside of academia.

The issue of human capital in today's knowledge economy is particularly pertinent in higher education because the academy is inherently knowledge-rich. Coates and Goedegebuure (2012) provide testimony to the valuable work of the Australian academic workforce, highlighting the crucial role of the vocation in the creation and dissemination of knowledge. In a non-exhaustive list of responsibilities, Coates and Goedegebuure (2012, p. 875) explain that academics "train a country's professional cadre, conduct scholarly and applied research, build international linkages, collaborate with business and industry, run large knowledge enterprises (universities), mentor individuals, train the research and the academic workforce, boost social equity, contribute to the creative life of the nation, develop communities, and contribute to broader economic development." Evidently, academics are inherently valuable not only to their university, but also society at large. In a study of Commonwealth higher education institutions, Kubler and DeLuca (2006) surveyed 123 institutions from 27 countries. This study found that 8 per cent of institutions experienced significant recruitment difficulties when seeking academic staff, while another 48 per cent experienced a moderate level of difficulty (Kubler and DeLuca, 2006). Saurombe, Barkhuizen and Schutte (2017, p. 2) contend that, "finding highly qualified and a potential pool of talented scholars remains a central management challenge in the 21st century." Scholars agree that that the attraction of human capital universities is important.

4.4 Summary

This chapter has provided an overview of strategic HRM, a background to the resource based view of the organisation, and discusses human capital in Australia's universities. Strategic HRM and the resource based view of the firm highlight the value of human capital to organisations in the knowledge-based economy. In particular, the capacity to human capital to enable and inform organisational strategy and goals is exemplified. Given the competitive nature of higher education in Australia, discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis, utilising a mechanism such as strategic HRM and the resource based view of the firm to realise organisational goals is desirable.

Section 4.3 discusses the human capital circumstances of Australia's university, and draws connections to Chapter 2 of this thesis, which explored literature regarding the academic vocation. Both the importance of, and difficulty, of recruiting talented human capital is exemplified. Ultimately, this chapter suggests that academics are both champions and proponents of the knowledge-based economy, and supports a key assertion of this thesis: that, because they enable the realisation of strategic goals and performance, attracting the highest calibre academics possible is desirable for university schools of business and law.

5.0 Employer Attractiveness and Employer Branding

Building on the literature in Chapter 4 of this thesis, which provides testimony of the value of human capital to strategic endeavours, organisational performance and success, and the difficulty in attracting talented human capital, this chapter explores the existing literature regarding organisational attraction, the emergence of employer branding. The process of potential employer decision making, and the determination of awareness, consideration and choice sets is highlighted in section 5.3 of this thesis. Section 5.4 of this thesis explores the organisational traits utilised in studies by other researchers before calling on the factors discussed in Chapter 2 of this thesis, regarding the academic vocation, to contextualise and identify a set of organisational traits which may drive employer attractiveness for early career and prospective business and law academics at Australia's universities.

5.1 Employer Attractiveness

Berthon, Ewing and Hah (2005) define organisational attractiveness as "the envisioned benefits that a potential employee sees in working for a specific organisation", while Aiman-Smith, Bauer and Cable (2001) define organisational attraction as a general positive response or attitude an individual exhibits towards an organisation. Catanzaro, Moore and Marshall (2010) explain that attaining an understanding of how job seeker's attraction occurs will assist organisations to attract the best qualified staff.

In an examination of HRM department priorities in 2007, Holland et al (2007) expressed concern over the lack of emphasis on how jobs are constructed and connected to development, and suggests that with an increasingly discerning target market, values and ethics demanded greater attention. Holland's (2007) revealed that 76 per cent of respondents had been involved in the development of new programs, policies or systems for employee attraction, 67 per cent had seen changes in employee selection, 76 per cent were working towards employer of choice status in the next five years. Meanwhile, only 55 per cent had exposure to work-life balance developments, 48 per cent in ethics and values, 39 per cent in career management, 38 per cent in diversity management, 37 per cent in skill development, 33 per cent in job analysis and 30 per cent job design. Holland et al (2007) Watty, Bellamy and Morley (2008) conducted research seeking the

opinion of some 3000 business academic staff, discovering that above teaching and research, autonomy and flexibility were the areas of paramount importance.

To attain an understanding of how organisational attraction occurs, it is logical to explore how attraction to other products occurs. Blythe (2012) explains that all consumer behaviour begins with drive (what makes people respond to a gap between actual and desired states), which is the basis of motivation. The actual state is the condition in which the person is currently in, while the desired state is the condition that the individual would like to be in. A consumer need arises when there is perceived lack of something, while a 'want' is a satisfier of a need (Blythe, 2012). Job seekers balance the desirability of organisational and job attributes with the amount of effort they anticipate would be associated with attaining a position at an organisation. Greenhaus, Sugalski and Crispin (1978) explain that Vroom's (1966) expectancy theory is relevant to organisational attraction and choice because attractiveness is derived from the perceived instrumentality available in the form of goal realisation, rewards or outcomes at a particular organisation and the desirability (or valence) of those provisions. Greenhaus et al (1978) continue to elaborate the influence of effort in the process. According to the theory, accessibility plays a crucial role in determining which organisation a job seeker is likely to pursue employment at, because attraction partners with effort in the determination of attraction. The desirability of an employing organisation is derived from the consumer's perception of the organisation's capacity to realise their goals. Determining what a consumer 'wants' allows sellers to tailor or modify products to meet needs. Similarly, awareness of the job seeker's desires can allow employing organisations to modify the job or organisational characteristics

5.2 Employer Branding

The individual job seeker goes to considerable effort to present themselves well in recruitment activities. Job applicants, with the intention of success in acquiring a position, often arrange to have their resumes professionally presented, strive to dress impressively for an interview and arrange a haircut beforehand. Two questions arise:

- What effort does the company go to attract employees?
- What does the aspiring employee really know about the employer?

Literature suggest that the answer lies in the employer's communication of their employer brand. Some companies have gone to significant effort to develop and communicate an employer brand,

while others are naive to its impact. The job seeker gathers information pertaining to the employer brand from a range of media and experiences over time, and this information influences the job seeker's attitude to the available position across all stages of the recruitment process.

Employer branding, "the process of building an identifiable and unique employer identity" (Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004, p. 502), has emerged in the quest to enhance attractiveness and gain competitive advantage. It involves the synergy of HRM practices and marketing practices, in particular the "science of branding" (Edwards 2010, p.106). Cable and Turban (2001, 2003) relate a job on offer to a product offered by a seller in a typical marketing situation, and a job seeker as a potential consumer in that process. In this situation, sellers in the marketplace (employers) promote the benefits of their product (a job) to consumers (job seekers). With a multitude of organisations endeavouring to lure potential employees, a metaphorical employer 'marketplace' is open for talented job seekers. Regarding job seekers as consumers in a marketplace of potential employers has been considered for some time (Breaugh, 1992; Fyock, 1993; Price; 1996; Mathews and Redman, 1994; Backhaus and Tikoo, 2004; Edwards, 2010; Ewing et al, 2002; Agrawal and Swaroop, 2009; Huang, Huang and Chiu, 2011). Backhaus and Tikoo (2004), along with Cable and Turban (2001) emphasise the importance of managing the brand. While brand has been traditionally associated with customers, it inevitably impacts on other stakeholders, such as shareholders (who may benefit or suffer from the brand's reputation), current and prospective employees.

Ambler and Barrow (1996, p.187), pioneers of the employer branding concept, define employer branding as "the package of functional, economic and psychological benefits provided by employment, and identified with the employing company". The functional benefits comprise of growth considerations, learning and professional development. Meanwhile, the economic benefits refer to salary or other financial or material rewards. Psychological benefits comprise feelings such as purpose, direction or belonging. Utilisation of the functional, economic and psychological dimensions was intended to align employer branding with product branding. with the 'product' market, while consideration of experience aligns more so with 'service' marketing. Ambler and Barrow (1996) is honoured by Wilden, Gudergan and Lings' (2010, p. 56) who define

the concept as "the package of psychological, economic and functional benefits that potential employees associate with employment with a particular company'.

While still a relatively new concept, agreement amongst academics and practitioners concerning its benefits is coming to light (Aggerholm, Andersen and Thomsen, 2011; Martin, Gollan and Grigg, 2011). Studies such as those conducted by Collins and Han, 2004 and Ito, Brotheridge and McFarland (2013) have found positive impacts on the number and quality of applicants, and employee satisfaction. The benefits of an attractive employer brand are supported by research conducted by the likes of Branham (2001), Davies (2008), Edwards (2010), Fulmer et al. (2003), and Wilden et al. (2010). For example, in 2002, in the infancy of employer branding, Phillips begin building an employer brand that saw it rise in target marker ideal employer rankings from 14 in 2003, to 4 in 2005 (Rosethorn, 2012). The exercise centred on the notion that "Philips employees touch the lives of people all over the world every day" (Pietersis, van Leeuwen and Crawford, 2005, p.18), developed following surveys and focus groups with staff.

Sullivan's (2004) definition of employer branding as 'a targeted, long-term strategy to manage the awareness and perception of employees, potential employees, and related stakeholders with regards to a particular firm", offers an important distinction to that of both Wilden, Gudergan and Link (2010) and Amber and Barrow (1996,) as it highlights impact on current employees and other stakeholders. Backhaus and Tikoo (2004) agree that, along with a focus on potential employees, employer branding requires consideration of current employees. Given that jobseekers may turn to word of mouth for information about an employer (Drury, 2016), there is an inherent involvement of existing employees in the employer brand. The incorporation of existing employees is well supported by scholars including Aggerholm, Andersen and Thomsen (2011), Edwards (2010), Ewing et al (2002) and Moroko and Uncles (2009). Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005) also emphasise that an employment relationship involves interactive experiences between the employer and employee. Edwards's (2010, p. 7) summary of employer branding is that it involves "identifying the unique 'employment experience' by considering the totality of tangible and intangible reward features that a particular organisation offers to its employees". Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello (2009) and Iglesias, Singh and Batista-Foguet (2011) also place emphasis on the role of experience, highlighting its role in purchase, satisfaction and retention.

For the employer, brand has the capacity to "creative positive attitudes or feelings; differentiate it from its competitors; and create value for the firm." (Drury, 2016).

Signalling theory (Spence, 1973) establishes that organisations send messages (or signals) regarding the product, service, brand or in this case employer brand, to both potential and existing consumers, or in this case potential or existing employees. When combined with social identity theory (Tajifel and Turner, 1979), which is concerned with belongingness to a group for a sense of who we are, it is conceivable that consumers would tend to select brands which fit with their own identity (Ashforth and Mael, 1989). In the employment space, Schneider's (1987) attraction selection attrition framework suggests that applicants seek employment at organisations whose characteristics and values align with their own personality and interests, organisation. Supporting this, Judge and Cable (1997) found that the values of job seekers typically aligned with the organisations they chose as preferred employers. Similarly, Kristof (1996) explains that a job seeker's perceived fit to an organisation is derived from their evaluation of how the organisation's characteristics and supplies aligns with their own characteristics and needs. Ng and Bourke (2005) agree that alignment between an individual's beliefs, values and personal characteristics and the organisation leads to attraction. Cable and Turban (2001) agree, noting the importance of understanding the beliefs of targeted applicants prior to decisions about recruitment strategies and spending.

Employer branding has emerged from a nexus between strategic HRM and the marketing concept of branding. From marketing theory, an organisation's brand is "essentially a seller's promise to consistently deliver a specific set of features, benefits and services to the buyers [and] […] is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller […] and differentiate them from those of competitors" (Kotler, 1997, p. 443). In employer branding, the seller equates to the role of the employer, and the buyer to the role of the employee or potential employee.

Importantly, as Kotler (1997) suggests, effective branding involves differentiation. Brand differentiation is seen as a major element in success of the brand (Keller, 1993), and a key step in the process of brand development (Agres, 1995). Lievens and Highhouse (2003) suggest that tied to the basic branding concept of differentiation, there is strong evidence that a distinctive employer brand is valuable in attracting applicants. However, Backhaus (2004) reveals

convergence and a lack of differentiation in employer brands, and Barwise and Meehan (2004) point out that among direct competitors, meaningful differentiation is difficult to achieve. Nonetheless, Chambers, Foulon, Handfield-Jones, Hankin and Michaels (1998) contend that a differentiated employer branding is fundamental to attracting the highest calibre talent.

Another fundamental tenant of brand marketing is that brands must be known and noticeable (Moroko and Uncles, 2009). This concept is termed brand awareness. Keller (1993), Hoyer and Brown (1990), and Holden (1993) explain that without brand awareness, it is unlikely that consumers will consider or select a brand by choice. Aaker (1991, p.61) defined brand awareness as "the ability of a buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category". Cable and Turban (2001) define employer brand familiarity as 'the level of awareness that a job seeker has of an organisation', and while some researchers have found no link with attraction (Allen, Mahto and Otondo, 2007), others such as Luce, Barber and Hillman (2011) and Turban et al (2001) have found a direct positive relationship between awareness and attraction.

Employer brands should be relevant and resonant (Moroko and Uncles, 2009). Relevance and resonance is built on the relevance of a value of proposition to consumers. In the employer branding context, the value proposition is the combination of benefits of working for a particular employer (Ambler and Barrow, 1996; Ewing, Pitt, de Bussy, Berthon, 2002). In designing a relevant and resonant brand, it is sensible to develop, combine and promotion organisational traits that would be valuable to the employee. This is a key area in which this thesis is valuable, as it determines those traits which potential academic staff in schools of business place value on.

Citing the reality that employees experience brands in different ways to consumers, Moroko and Uncles (2009) explored the characteristics of effective employer brands. Their research ratified existing understanding of branding in the three key domains discussed here: being known and noticeable, being relevant and resonant and, being differentiated from direct competitors. Moroko and Uncles (2009) also uncovered two distinct features of the employer brand: the importance of fulfilment of psychological contract and, unintended appropriation of brand values.

Psychological contract refers to the "reciprocal expectations of individual employees and their individual managers, and includes the whole pattern of rights, privileges and obligations between employees and their organisaitons […] beliefs about fairness, trust and the delivery of worthwhile employment relationships" (Nankervis, Compton, Baird and Coffey, 2011, p. 10). The expectations can result from either real experience working for the organisation, or those developed through indicative (even implied) promises of the organisation (Tomprou and Nikolaou, 2011), meaning that the psychological contract is indeed a work in progress even prior to recruitment. Failed realisation or breach of the psychological contract is linked with employee dissatisfaction, retention issues and poor performance (Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski and Bravo, 2007; Suazo, Turnley and Mai, 2005; Raja, Johns and Ntalianis, 2004; Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly, 2003; Bunderson, 2001; Turnley and Feldman, 1999; Robinson, 1996; Robinson and Rousseau, 1994). Breach of psychological contract is also linked with stress (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994), which is particularly pertinent in academia, given that members of the academy suffer more severe stress than the wider population (Winefield, Gillespie, Stough, Dua, Hapuarachchi and Boyd, 2003). Shen (2010) found that the academic psychological contract differed to those in other occupations (with specific factors such as funding and time for research) and that psychological contract fulfilment was low.

The unintended appropriation of brand benefits is linked with the reality that it is difficult to discern the realities of employment with an employer before actually working there. Kulkarni and Nithyanand (2012) suggest that job choice decisions are influenced by social comparison and norms. In the face of ambiguity, or information from other sources, the influence of social ties is increased (Kildfuff, 1990). Rynes (1991) recognises that employers face considerably difficulty in attaining information about the characteristics of a job prior to actually working in it, while in recent times websites such as GlassDoor (www.glassdoor.com) claim to reveal more information. Similarly, schemes such as The Best Uni to Work For (www.thebestuni.com.au) offer valuable insights into the industry. Such sources are not scarce, with the Australian Human Resource Institute issuing yearly awards to employers in a range of categories (www.awards.ahri.com.au), and media outlets such as Fairfax Media Publications publishing a yearly list of 'Best Places to Work' (http://www.brw.com.au/lists/best-places-to-work/2012/) in BRW. The citation of 'Employer of Choice for Gender Equality' is awarded by the Australian Government Workplace Gender Equality Agency and claims to offer employers an advantage in "differentiating their

employer brand and attracting and retaining top talent" (Workplace Gender Equality Agency, 2013). There is still research to be done in examining how these sources influence the formation of employer knowledge and inferences about the desirability of employment at particular organisations. Along with websites such as GlassDoor, potential recruits gather information about potential employers through websites (Lievens and Hoye, 2007), recruitment advertisements (Brown and Stayman, 1992), internships, broader advertising activities (Cable, Aiman-Smith, Muvley and Edwards, 2000), and word of mouth (Cable and Turban, 2001).

To unpack the concept of brand (all brands, not just employer brands), Katz (1960) and Locander and Spivey (1978) suggested that the brand could be deconstructed into symbolic and functional characteristics. Applying this principal to employer branding, tangible aspects of an employer brand can be grouped into the functional component, while intangible, subjective features constitute the symbolic component. Drury (2016. p. 29) deconstructed the concept of employer brand, into two discreet categories:

1. "Functional attributes such as salary, benefits, health care coverage and leave allowances; and"
2. "Symbolic attributes like work culture, career development opportunities and the prestige of working for a well-known company".

In 2007, Lievens, Van Hoye and Anseel sampled 179 current and 258 prospective Belgium Army employees. In this study, the researchers discovered that people attracted to join the Army were largely influenced by instrumental factors (team, activities, job security, structure), but symbolic trait inferences led to significant variance, beyond that of the instrumental. A 2013 study by Ito, Brotheridge and McFarland's found that symbolic factors were responsible for job satisfaction more so than their instrumental counterparts.

Building a strong employer brand is integral to attracting, retaining and keeping employees engaged. Employer branding is a successful marketing tool that helps organisations position themselves as an employer of choice and bring about several benefits including, reduced employee turnover, enhanced employee satisfaction, customer retention (Miles and Mangold, 2004) and the ability to sustain lower wages rates than the industry average (Ritson, 2002). However, in this competitive labour market literature suggests that HRM is taking on a greater role in employer branding. Urbancova and Huda kova 's (2017) agree and studied the

benefits of a stable integrated HRM and employer branding strategy incorporating an emphasis on customers, employees and financial performance as integral parts of good employer branding. They (Urbancova and Huda kova , 2017) identified five benefits to organisations because of an integrated HR marketing strategy and employer branding: winning new talented employees; retaining key employees; increasing motivation of current employees; improving public brand awareness of the organisation; and improving financial performance. Unfortunately, according to a survey by Willock (2005) 95 per cent of respondents surveyed believed that employer branding is important yet, HRM professionals are ill equipped on how to incorporate this into their practice.

5.3 Potential Employee Decision Making

Grund (2013) explains that the compensatory decision making technique involves consideration of a weighted sum of numerous job attributes. Grund (2013) cites Vroom's (1966) expectancy theory, which was used by Slaughter, Richard and Martin (2006) to determine that the potential employee subjectively evaluates the attributes of the job subjectively and subjectively weights those. While separate attributes of the job may be less desirable with one particular employer, this may be compensated through positive evaluations of other attributes. The subjective and independent nature of the evaluations means that there is no impact on a job seeker's net utility (Von Neumann and Morgenstern 1947). The non-compensatory decision making process suggests that all characteristics or attributes must meet a minimum standard for the option to be seen as viable. In a study investigating whether job choice assumes a compensatory or non-compensatory decision making process, Osborn (1990) found that non-compensatory factors arose from pay, benefits and career advancement opportunities, with these attributes acting as hygiene factors. The antecedent drives, needs, wants, motivations and motives of the consumer are met by the organisation through the provision of various job and organisational 'attributes', which are evaluated by the consumer in terms of their instrumentality in realising their individual goals.

Consumers then evaluate alternatives with consideration given to how they fulfil these motives. It is apparent that potential staff with knowledge of employers group organisations into 'choice', 'consideration' and 'awareness' sets using evaluative criteria. While effort to be placed in a job and the perceived capacity of the organisation to realise goals determines attractiveness at the macro level, it is valuable to consider which distinct organisational attributes combine to suggest to the consumer that the organisation would provide such goal realisation. This consideration of

different traits is analogous to the evaluation of alternatives which occurs in the consumer decision making process. For a potential employee or consumer to possess employer knowledge and be capable of determining the desirability of an organisation as an employer, they must possess a degree of awareness of or familiarity with that brand. Aaker (1991) suggests four levels of brand awareness exist: unawareness (complete absence of familiarity; consumer may have never heard of the brand), recognition (some familiarity; consumer has heard of the brand but may know little about it), recall (high familiarity; consumer recalls the name of the brand and rudimentary characteristics), and top of mind (highest familiarity; the first brand the consumer thinks of within a sector/industry/category). Aaker (1991), along with Cable and Turban (2001), suggest that familiarity is important because it establishes a platform for new information, is likely to be associated with positive responses as people typically like the familiar; and suggests substance. Turban and Greening (1997), along with Cable and Graham (2000) found that familiarity was positively correlated with reputation. Significantly, Cable and Turban (2001) posit that absence of knowledge detracts from organisational image (and subsequently attraction), as the consumer may question desirability or appropriateness more in initial interactions. Freeman, Carroll and Hannan (1983) term this the "liability of newness". Zajonc (1968) found that positive evaluations of an entity were more likely with higher levels of exposure. When questions are posed relating to the individual's evaluation of an organisation, respondents will be afforded the option to select an absence of knowledge of the employer. As evaluations occur, products in the awareness set which perform well enter a 'consideration' set, while those which perform favourably enter the individual's 'choice' set.

Behling, Labovitz and Gainer's (1968) objective factor theory suggests that job seekers base choice on evaluation on a range of job attributes. These attributes can be divided into those pertaining to the job, and those relevant to the employer as a whole. While factors such as pay, tenure or growth opportunities may be tied to the job itself, they could be seen as manifestations of the organisation's decisions regarding job design, culture and overarching human capital philosophy. This study does not consider job choice, with the focus instead being organisational choice within the set job role of university academic. As such, this study includes only the motives of participants who demonstrate their aspiration is employment as an academic member of staff in the business school of an Australian university. In consumer behaviour, motives are categorised as primary, secondary, rational, emotive, conscious or dormant (Blythe, 2012). Primary motives

explain why individuals seek to acquire a certain class of product (a job for instance), while secondary motives are associated with the particular brand acquired within that class (a particular organisation, in the context of employment). Rational motives are logical and reasoned, while emotional motives are typically associated with feelings. Conscious motives are those the consumer is aware of, while dormant motives are processed unwittingly. Separate analysis or categorisation of motives will not be included in this study, but consideration of this theory is pertinent given the design assuming primary motive. The focus is on secondary motives, as consideration is given to the comparison of alternatives within a certain class of product (academic employment at an Australian university business school). With this in mind, this study will not investigate job and employer factors as separate entities, but will accept that the job choice is predetermined for those involved in the study.

5.4 Employer Traits

As established, the employer brand consists of a set of functional and symbolic traits which may be attractive (or not) to prospective employee. The key focus of this study is to determine those employer traits which indeed are attractive to prospective and early career academics in business and law, and which of these traits can be leveraged by regional universities to enhance their attractiveness as an employer. To begin this process, it is necessary to determine those employer traits which should be included in the study. To do so, a comprehensive review of those traits considered in other studies has been conducted.

The lists and combinations of traits studied by different researcher is many and varied. Some, such as Berthon, Ewing and Hah's (2005) employer attractiveness scale, have been built around particularly areas. Theirs (Berthon, Ewing and Hah, 2005) contains five key factors, the first two of which are psychological, while the remaining three are functional:

1. Interest value (the work environment, work practices)
2. Social value (workplace culture and relationships)
3. Development value (recognition, career development)
4. Application value (opportunity to apply the employee's knowledge and skills)
5. Economic value (salary and compensation)

Berthon, Ewing and Hah (2005) used a scale included 25 items divided into economic, development, application, social and interest groups, and termed it EmpAtt. The study was conducted with 683 Australian university students. The traits examined were the organisation providing innovative products and services, innovative employer with novel work practices, the organisation valuing and making use of your creativity, production of high quality products and services, an exciting environment, a good relationship with colleagues, supportive and encouraging colleagues, a fun working environment, a happy working environment, an attractive overall compensation package, an above average basic salary, job security, good promotion opportunities, inter-departmental experience, self-confidence, career enhancement, a springboard for future employment, recognition and appreciation, opportunity to teach others, opportunity to apply what you have learnt, opportunity to apply what you have learnt at a tertiary institution, customer orientation, the organisation gives back to society, and acceptance and belonging. EmpAtt was later used by Elving, Westhoff, Meeusen and Schoonderbeek (2013) to examine job advertisements in the Netherlands and Bonaiuto, De Dominicis, Illia, Rodríguez-Cánovas & Lizzani (2013) in Italy to compare ideal and real employer traits. EmpAtt (along with two new traits of a strong and clear company culture, and an ethical organisation) was used by Roy (2008) in a study involved 150 final semester students from a University in India,

There is certainly not unanimous agreement among researchers to utilise the traits identified by Berthon, Ewing and Li (2005). The veritable plethora of organisational traits which could be considered mean that a limitation of scope is necessary in the design of this research. However, it is valuable to explore the traits examined by other researchers. For example, Lievens et al (2007) examined traits of salary, job security, task diversity, opportunity for sport, opportunity for social/team activities, advancement opportunities, opportunities to work in a structured environment and travel opportunities as traits in their study of 258 Belgium army applicants and 179 employees.

Hieronimus, Schaefer and Shroder (2005) and Turban, Forret and Hendrickson (1998) posed the inclusion of location, a functional value. Location was considered in a large study of 153.367 students at 24 European countries by Christiaans (2013) who also examined traits of the organisation's product/services, job work tasks, friendly colleagues, innovation, job security, employer leadership style, employer success in the market, level of responsibility given to staff,

possibility of working abroad, professional development/training, promotion opportunities, corporate social responsibility, starting salary and work life balance. Van Hoye and Lievens (2007) also examined location, along with traits of industry, organisation size, salary and benefits, career opportunities, educational prospects and job content as traits in their analysis of 171 Belgium university students. Heckert, Droste, Framer, Adams, Bradley and Bonness (2002) included location as they also examined traits of intellectual stimulation, challenge, making use of abilities, enhancing skills/knowledge, sense of accomplishment, interest in the work, importance of the work, requirement for originality and creativity, variety in activities, decision freedom, job difficulty, proximity to family members, amount of travel involved, company's reputation, promotion possibilities, performance bonuses, prestige of the position, pay, responsibility, supervisor attitudes, co-worker attitudes, supervisors who are admired and respected, quality of supervisor, clear-cut rules and procedures, adequate resources on the job, ample leisure time off the job, good hours, freedom from supervision, amount of privacy of work area, ease of travel to and from work, availability of child care, willingness to accommodate parental needs, ease of movement into and out of workforce, opportunity for part-time work, health and dental insurance, vacation benefits, retirement program, job security, sick leave, reimbursement for further education, comfortable working conditions, making a social contribution, working with the public, supervision of others, working in a team, using your educational background, and frequent performance feedback as traits in their study of 102 university students and 504 alumni. Given the focus of this study, regional universities, location presents as an important consideration, and is included in the list of traits.

A study by Gerdes (2008) also highlighted the importance of work/life balance (which was present in Christiaans, 2013) study, but notably absent in Berthon, Ewing and Hah's EmpAtt. The discussion of academic vocation provided in Chapter 2, particularly emphasises concerns within academia regarding workloads and work/life balance, so this criteria has been added. Flexible working hours (a form of work/life balance) was included by Lievens and Highhouse (2003) as they also examined traits of job security, pay, advancement and development, task demands, working with customers, location, and benefits in a study of 275 university students and 124 bank employees. Trank, Rynes and Bretz (2002) examined traits of the work itself, praise and recognition, selective hiring, fast promotion, opportunities for promotion, pay (including

contingent and individual), flexibility and a broad career in their study of 378 business and arts university students.

Arachige and Robertson (2011) chose to include location in their study, or work life balance, instead examining traits of recognition/appreciation from management, a fun working environment, opportunity for better jobs in the future, feeling good about yourself as a result of working for the organisation, feeling more self-confident as a result of working for the organisation, gaining experience that will your career, having a good relationship with supervisors, supporting and encouraging colleagues, working in an exciting environment, working for an innovative employer with new work practices and ideas, the organisational valuing and making use of your creativity, the organisation producing high quality products and services, the organisation producing innovative products and services, good promotion opportunities, a socially responsible organisation, opportunity to apply what was learned at university, acceptance and belonging, the organisation being customer-oriented, job security, experience in a range of departments, a happy work environment, an above average basic salary, an attractive overall compensation package, a very profitable organisation, a large company, a company that is well known through advertising and media exposure, the type of product and/or service produced by the company, the quality of management, the organisation being known for its honesty and fairness, and the job giving you greater respect from family and friends in a study of 221 business students from one university.

Also neglecting location and work life balance, Sutherland, Torricelli and Karg (2002) examined traits of a culture of career growth and challenging work, personal training and development opportunities, pay (including it being linked to performance and profit sharing), being a global and innovative company based on good products, large company offering job rotation and diversity, successful company based on strong products, challenging work in a non-hierarchical company, liking the work and the industry, values based organisational (valuing employees, cultural diversity, social responsibility, access to resources), benefits (such as fringe benefits, status and work experience), comfort in knowing existing staff, small organisation, casual dress and comfortable work environment, in a study of 135 business students at a university in South Africa. Similarly, a study by Honeycutt and Rosen (1997) did not consider location or work life balance as they examined traits of career path and policies, salary and identity in a study of 210

Masters of Business Administration and 55 Executive Masters of Business Administration students from one American university.

5.5 University Employer Traits

Calling on the literature discussed in the previous chapters of this thesis, consideration of the findings of these studies and contextualisation through the lens of literature pertaining to academic work and regional universities, the organisational traits selected for the study were:

- Reputation (for research and teaching)
- Organisational Culture
- Job Design (research/teaching focus, autonomy, administrative workload)
- Career Development and Growth
- Job Security
- Workplace Features (e.g. gym, childcare, food, modern offices)
- Location

It is important to recognise that, regardless of the trait or traits incorporated, interplay between the various traits is inevitable. For instance, Shapiro (1983) found that consumers interpret brand image as signals about product quality (so organisational factors are linked with job factors in this context) while Keller (1993) found that consumers infer discrete attributes from overall evaluation of a brand. For example, Cable and Graham (2000), Ferris, Arthur, Berkson, Kaplan, Harrell-Cook and Frink (1998) and Turban and Greening (1997) found that job seekers would make a positive deduction about a firm's reputation if the organisation is socially responsible and pays well. There are intrinsic ties between many of the traits indicated for this study, including that a research focussed job design is likely linked with a reputation for research, that administrative workload may be linked with culture, that research/teaching focus may be linked with career development and growth; or job security may be linked with organisational culture.

Each of the employer traits identified are discussed here, with their positioning in the Australian higher education context emphasised.

5.5.1 Reputation

Fombrun (1996) defines reputation as the positive or negative, strong or weak, public emotional reaction to a company's name. Various factors combine to form the reputation of the brand, which has been shown to significantly influence attraction (Gatewood, Gowan and Lautenschlager, 1993) because it allows for inferences about job attributes and expected pride in membership (Cable and Turban, 2001). In this study, consideration is given to the research and teaching reputations of the institutions. Chapter 3 of this thesis details the positioning of Australia's universities, and emphasises the importance placed on league tables and accreditations in the stratification of the higher education sector in Australia.

In endeavouring to define reputation, Cable and Turban (2001) strike the conclusion that reputation alone (separate from brand image) constitutes affective evaluation. However, such a stand precludes the separate evaluation of organisation image factors such as organisational culture and corporate social responsibility which are intrinsically fuelled by affectivity. Moreover, conclusions about reputation are not exclusively affective, with ranking schemes and league tables at least endeavouring to rank organisations on their standing. In higher education, the proliferation of rankings means that this is widely accepted and acknowledged in the determination of reputation and status. Cable and Turban's (2001) separation of brand image from reputation based on individual versus collective appraisal is more convincing. In their view (Cable and Turban, 2001), reputation is derived from the individual's perception of how others evaluate an organisation, but their own beliefs or evaluations may be different. This sits well with Cable and Graham's (2000) assertion that because of close affiliation with the organisation, employee's evaluation of reputational attributes will be impacted.

Collins and Han (2004) and Turban and Cable (2003) found that reputation enhances an organisation's capacity to attract qualified employees. Shapiro (1983) explains that, in accordance with economic theory, reputation is a signal of both quality and uncertainty. As such, a candidate may deduce conclusions about employment conditions based on reputation (Williamson, King, Lepak and Sarma, 2010). Further, Williamson, King, Lepak and Sarma (2010) suggest that organisations with positive reputations are likely to receive validation of their status as suitable employers, because of their public prominence and recognition. Public prominence and recognition may also occur in a negative light. Rindova, Williamson, Petkova and Sever (2005)

determined that such negative exposure would likely lead to weaker reputations and less positive evaluation by prospective employees. Similarly, non-existent publicity leads to weaker evaluations (Rindova et al, 2005). Williamson, King, Lepak and Sarma (2010) couple economic theory with institutional theory to suggest that organisations with a positive reputation will yield a greater level of positive evaluations from the labour market. Kilduff (1990) concludes the validation of suitable employer that a job seeker's networks can provide emphasises the importance of reputation, while Jacoby, Hoyer and Brief (1992) also found that positive evaluation of an organisation by peers legitimised decisions. Reputation is also linked with social identify theory, as organisational membership is known to shape self-concept (Ashfort and Mael, 1989). As such, in the quest for positive self-concept and esteem, potential employees may be likely to prefer organisations with positive reputations (Turban and Cable, 2003; Turban, Forret and Hendrickson, 1998).

In the context of universities in Australia, reputation is conceived to be that pertaining to its research and or teaching performance.

5.5.2 Organisational Culture

Cantanzaro, Moore and Marshall (2010) conducted job pursuit, organisational preference and choice research among 256 undergraduate students from a liberal arts university in south eastern Virginia. The study was to examine the attraction of female and male students to competitive organisational culture in comparison with a supportive organisational culture, and drew a number of parallels to the work of Vianen and Fisher (2002). Both studies found that men were more likely to show a greater preference for competition, women were more likely to show a greater preference for support, but overall both genders preferred a supportive workplace over a competitive workplace.

McShane, Olekalns and Travaglione (2013) also explain the crucial role of organisational justice, support, shared values and trust in establishing and sustaining organisational commitment, identifying fairness, courtesy, forgiveness, moral integrity, reciprocal trust, positive expectations of individuals, and job security as important characteristics. HRM practices can be used to build organisational commitment. While Mc Shane et al (2013) recognise that some financial connection is necessary for affective commitment, Smeenk, Teelken, Doorewaard and Elsinga

(2006) report the absence of such an influence. Herzberg's motivator-hygiene theory (1964) suggests that the failed provision of a salary commensurate with the duties or responsibilities of position would result in staff dissatisfaction (McShane et al, 2013), while such an oversight may be interpreted as a violation of trust or values. Both McShane et al (2013) (who publishes in the broad realm of organisational behaviour) and Smeenk et al (2006) (who narrows the field to the university sector), agree that participation plays a significant role.

De Zilwa (2007) and Ryan (2012) highlight the rapid pace in which the external environment impacting on universities has been and is changing. The decline in public funding, increasing operating costs, competitiveness for the international student market, competitive vying for research and student funding, higher student-staff ratios, accountability for internal and external key performance indicators and quality assurance measures are all factors impacting on the internal environment and ultimately, the culture of higher education institutes and their academics (de Zilwa, 2007). With these impacts, changes to the academic culture have occurred with higher reports of stress reportedly due to reduced funding, increased workload, lack of leadership and reward and recognition programs and job insecurity. De Zilwa (2007) found that within academic units it is common place for various sub-cultures to exist including, managerial verses a marketing sub-culture, education as a social capital verses a community obligation sub-culture, pedagogy verses research verses administrative bureaucratic sub-culture. With such division and fragmentation amongst these sub-cultures, synergy and adaptation to change often results in a standstill (de Zilwa, 2007). Where once considerable autonomy for academics with regards to research, teaching and decisions existed, academic employment now exists within a complex system and hierarchy of governance causing a shift in power from academics to university executives (De Zilwa, 2007) (Kenny, 2018). Ryan (2012) suggests that this change has led to a general sense of academic withdrawal and a weak sense of academic resistance towards adapting to changes. Kenny (2018) suggests that the trend of corporate or managerial approaches within academic units has disempowered academics and that a more balanced power relationship is required to allow academics more influence over their work processes and ultimately preserve the self-managed aspects of their careers.

The absence of precision in the definition or understanding of organisational culture means typologies designed to evaluate, diagnose or improve can prove unhelpful. As Tierney (1998, p2) explains, ""widely varying definitions, research methods, and standards for understanding culture create confusion as often as they provide insight". This study will utilise the Competing Values Framework developed by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1981) along with Cameron and Quinn (1999) as a lens to explore organisational culture. The four types identified by Cameron and Quinn (1999) are:

- Clan culture (internal focus and flexible) - A friendly workplace where leaders act like father figures.
- Adhocracy culture (external focus and flexible) - A dynamic workplace with leaders that stimulate innovation.
- Market culture (external focus and controlled) - A competitive workplace with leaders like hard drivers
- Hierarchy culture (internal focus and controlled) - A structured and formalized workplace where leaders act like coordinators.

Contemporary frameworks for organisational culture and leadership, such as that posed by Bolman and Deal (2016), suggest that positive cultural paradigms (i.e. friendly, supportive, dynamic and innovative) cultures above (clan and adhocracy), would align best with the transformative and positive leadership behaviours that have been shown to enhance performance and allow for the realisation of strategy in today's organisations.

5.5.3 Job Design

Enders and DeWeert (2009) contend that the current academic career structure fails to meet the operational and educational demands of the role, and establishes barriers to success. While the academic vocation has traditionally allowed flexibility in where and when academic work is conducted, increases in work load, increased student-staff ratios, research productivity pressures and managerialism (Doherty and Manfredi, 2006). Linked clearly with work/life balance, this concern also ties to job design, as it refers to the confiscation of autonomy traditionally enjoyed by the academic. Bellamy, Morley and Watty (2003) revealed that flexibility and autonomy were the two main factors which contributed to academic retention. While teaching, research and being part of a community of scholars came in third, fourth and fifth place, they were far

outweighed by the aforementioned factors (Watty, Bellamy and Morley, 2008). A study by Winter, Taylor and Sarros (2000) revealed that teaching and research remained major motivators for academic work. Winter et al (2000) noted that employees enjoyed a high level of workplace autonomy. Watty, Bellamy and Morley (2008) do explain that Winter et al's research was conducted some five years before their own (1997 and 2002 respective), and significant change has occurred in that period. It is also worthy to recognise that Bellamy et al's (2003) research involved 3000 business academic staff from a range of Australian universities, while Winter et al's (2000) including a significantly smaller sample (300 participants) from only one Australian institution. More about the design and structure of the academic vocation is discussed in Section 2.5 of this thesis.

Higher education institutions have adopted and applied private sector commercial management models on the assumption that this would increase efficiency and improve quality, while limiting expenditure (Erridge, Fee and McIlroy, 1998). Groot (1999) suggests that the ambiguity, intangible outputs, and autonomy at the heart of public sector work means simply transferring commercial models is inappropriate. Meanwhile, Coy and Pratt (1998) argue that social and political goals of public organisations are inherently different to the economic goals of the private sector. While managerialist tactics are designed with the logical imperative of public accountability and increasing performance in mind, Ackroyd and Ackroyd (1999) discourage prescription, as they do not consider the contextual situation of the university sector. Watty, Bellamy and Morley (2008) elucidate the negative impact of new public management on academic autonomy, flexibility and accountability. In 1998, Coaldrake and Stedman reported that their work had become more stressful, more demanding, less autonomous, less satisfying, less motivating and less rewarding.

The provision of policies and practices which support work life balance reflects justice and support for existing employees and prospective employees, and potentially allows for a demonstration of shared values. Lyness and Kropf (2005) and Nadler, Cundiff, Lowery and Jackson (2010) highlight the importance of work flexibility in organisational attraction. It is widely acknowledged the importance that work/life balance initiatives play in the attractiveness of a workplace to applicants (Firfiray and Mayo, 2017). In fact, each year Fortune magazine identifies the top 100 organisations that are growing and diversifying their work/life balance programs with the specific aim to help employees balance their work and personal lives (Muse, Harris, Giles and Feild, 2008).

Firfiray and Mayo (2017) go on to explain that job seekers pursue those firms that actively include work/life balance policies and incentives in their recruitment materials and found that their person-organisation fit opinion was stronger. Muse, Harris, Giles, and Feild (2008) go on to explain that these work/life balance packages are only as valuable as that to the receiver for instance, someone who does not have children nor plans to have any, may not value on-site childcare over someone who does have children. Muse, Harris, Giles, and Feild (2008) identify work/life balance packages to include child related incentives such as, childcare facilities, childhood health programs and maternity/paternity leave; time incentives such as, job sharing, part-time and flexible hours; physical health incentives such as, medical and fitness centres and wellness programs; psychological well-being programs such as, employee assistance programs; professional development incentives such as, training and tuition re-imbursement; and eldercare incentives such as, assistance and referrals.

Contemporary work/life balance research differentiates between structural elements and cultural dimensions (Behson, 2005). Structural elements include formal HRM policies and practices, and concrete provisions of flexibility such as on-site child care centres, gymnasiums, subsidised healthcare (Daverth, Hyde and Cassell, 2015). Meanwhile, cultural dimensions refer to those often subliminal factors that moderate the operationalisation of the work/life balance initiatives (Daverth, Hyde and Cassell, 2015). Cultural dimensions include managerial support (Thompson, Beauvais and Lyness, 1999) and support from colleagues (de Sivatte and Guadamillas, 2012). Whilst most early research in work/life balance was concerned with the formulation of formal HRM policies and practices, contemporary research shifts the focus to the cultural dimensions which enable the utilisation of work/life balance initiatives (McDonald, Brown, and Bradley, 2005; Thompson et al., 1999). Much of this work has revealed a significant gap in the structural and cultural dimensions (Greenhaus and Powell, 2012; Hammer, Kossek, Yragui, Bodner, and Hanson, 2009; Hammer, Kossek, Anger, Bodner, and Zimmerman, 2011; Kossek, Lewis, and Hammer, 2010; Ollier-Malaterre, 2010), while some has found some levels of integration (Aryee, Chu, Kim & Ryu, 2013; Breaugh and Frye, 2008; de Sivatte and Guadamillas, 2012; Dikkers, Geurts, Dulk, Peper, Taris and Kompier, 2007). Schwartz's (1989) Harvard Business Review article 'Management women and the new facts of life' struck controversy when it suggested that the greater cost of hiring women to men could be averted with programs that allowed the balance of career and family, and organisations that pursued this could benefit greatly from such flexibility. While

important, Schwartz's assertions did not to validate the merit of affording such flexibility and opportunity for balance to both female and male employees. Studies such as those by Burke (2010) and Powell (1999) indicate that flexible work practices which allow for work life balance are also important for men.

Sharafizad, Paull and Omari (2011) agree that flexible work arrangements present as an attraction mechanism that also serves to retain staff. They observe the work of Waters and Bardoel (2006) who identified that the provision of flexible work arrangements is increasing at universities, but are quick to point out that the numerous studies that suggest a gap between provision and uptake. Flexible work arrangements have graced corporate workplaces for some time now, having their origins in the skills shortages of the 1980s (Lewis, 2001, cited in Sharafizad et al 2011). Sharafizad et al's (2011) research refers to staff remarks to validate the perspective that flexible work arrangements have not lead to work-life balance for academic staff. In fact, contrary to this, work intensification and extension of hours has become common. In 2000, the National Tertiary Education Union published a study reporting that 29 per cent of academic staff work more than 60 hours per week, 66.1 per cent over 50 hours per week, and 88.8 per cent work more than 40 hours per week. However, flexible work practices allow employees the flexibility to meet individual needs, and lead to an increase in the number of women in the workplace, increased return from maternity leave, re-engagement of older employees, lower turnover, increased retention, and improved organisational reputation (Holland et al, 2007). Many organisations deliberately point out benefits of work-life balance, family friendly benefits and diversity, which Holland et al (2007) point out not only link to attraction, but with retention and re-engagement of older employees. Research has shown that HRM strategies can lead to improvements in bottom line results due to reduced absenteeism and turnover (Carless and Wintle, 2007). Rau and Hyland's (2002) confirmed that work-family balance programs had a positive impact on employer attractiveness.

In response to the paradox of worsening job conditions and concerns over job satisfaction, and an observation that academics are not leaving the vocation in droves, Watty, Bellamy and Morley (2008) conducted research of some 3000 academics working in business, accounting, management and economics at Australian universities to determine why people chose to become, and remain, academics. In the initial findings, autonomy and flexibility were of paramount

importance, followed much later by teaching and research, and then in turn by being part of a scholarly community.

5.5.4 Job Security

Job security is concerned with the level of certainty a person feels in relation to the continuity of their job (Wang, Lu and Siu, 2015; Hui and Lee, 2000). Job insecurity has been found to have "detrimental consequences for employees' job attitudes, organisational attitudes, health, and to some extern, their behavioural relationship with the organisation" (Sverke, Hellgren and Näswall, 2002). Research by Lu, Du, Xu and Zhang (2016) affirmed the importance of job security in enhancing performance in stressful workplaces. Catano, Francis, Haines, Kirpalani, Shannon, Stringer and Lozanzki's (2010) study of 1,440 staff from 56 universities in Canada revealed that feelings of job insecurity were associated with a lack of job satisfaction and psychological distress.

Nadolny and Ryan (2015, p. 142) discuss whether there is a "McDonaldization" of higher education occurring in Australia, pointing to the heavy "reliance on flexible casualised labour and hyper-rationalization of service delivery". Casual academic staff in Australia have been described as "the lost tribe" (Brand, 2013), "marginalised educational outworkers" (Blackmore, 2002, p. 433), and "the proletariat of the academic profession" (Percy et al, 2008). Casual academic work has tripled since 1990 (May et al, 2013), and unfortunately limits career advancement for aspiring academics (Burgess, Campbell and May, 2008; Gottschalk and McEachern, 2010; Newfield, 2008), many of whom aspire to permanent employment (National Tertiary Education Union, 2015; May et al, 2013). In Bexley, Arkoudis and James' (2013) study of 5,500 academics across 19 Australian universities, 622 respondents identified as casual or sessional academics. Of these, 66 per cent were females employed at Level, and over 50 per cent were aged over 40, reflecting the concerns of May (2011) that the casual academic work is disproportionately female. Less than half of the sessional staff in Bexley et al's (2013) study were research higher degree students, possibly dispelling the notion that sessional work is part of the academic apprenticeship (or perhaps merely confirming (as experienced in the research for this thesis) that capturing responses from sessional academic staff in surveys is difficult).

Job insecurity is also associated with contract, rather than tenured, employment. Broadbent, Troup and Strachan's (2013) study of 2488 research-focussed academics revealed that while

tenured and contract academic staff share the same career ambitions, contract staff see their prospects as poor, with their employment status driving career choices. As McKenzie (2016) explains, "for those employed in unstable academic roles, the inability to buy a home, to remain living in one place, or to manage mortgage repayments" is a common concern.

5.5.5 Career, Development and Growth

Nankervis, Baird, Coffey and Shields (2017, pp. 277) suggest that 'all employees, whether they hold managerial, team leadership, professional, technical or unskilled roles within a company, require continual learning and development if their potential is to be utilised effectively'. However, traditionally, Australian organisations have not invested heavily in training and development (Holland et al, 2007), instead relying on immigration and poaching to solve skills shortages. At the same time, there is a trend for gold-collar employees to change jobs more often, exercising their status in the labour market, high level transferable skills, and ability to apply these skills to problems in the realisation of organisational advantage to seek variation and conditions that meet their needs (Holland et al, 2007). With this in mind, organisational development may be waning as such investment can walk out the door sooner than hoped. However, training and development are crucial for employee retention (Edgar and Geare, 2005, cited in Holland et al, 2007).

Yaqub and Khan's (2011) study of university students' attitudes to employers revealed that students would prefer to join organisations that offer career growth opportunity. Similarly, Boswell et al (2003) found that advancement opportunities and training provided were key factors considered when job seekers consider their desired employer.

Martin (2011) notes that flow, relationships, helping others and mindfulness are the crucial tenants of employee happiness. Resonating with Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, Csikszentmihalyi (1990, cited in Martin 2011) explains that flow involves pushing individuals to the limit of (but not exceeding) their abilities and allows for the greatest levels of satisfaction, and avoids boredom (with overly simple tasks) and anxiety (associated with overly challenging tasks). Martin (2011) suggests that if staff develop skills and set challenges, the level of satisfaction and happiness will increase, be that in administrative, teaching, research or other tasks.

5.5.6 Location

Location is a major consideration in this study, as particular emphasis is placed on the attraction challenges faced by business schools at regional universities in Australia. It is anticipated that location will be a significant determinant of attractiveness, and will be influenced by current and past locations lived, preferred lifestyle, and propensity to move locations.

McGrail, Humphreys, Joyce, Scott and Kalb (2011, p192) highlight that despite "more than a decade of innovative rural workforce recruitment and retention policies and programmes", non-metropolitan Australia endures inadequate, inappropriate and unsustainable quality medical care. McGrail et al (2011) cite the professional needs and interests of the staff member, along with geographical, social and community factors as the two broad sets of factors influencing the decision to pursue opportunities for work outside of metropolitan centres. Their study examines the associate between rural amenities and workforce availability, and finds that there may be a significant association between amenities and workforce shortages, though the current process for designating areas with a staff shortfall in the medical profession reveals only a small contribution from rural amenity. The process, which categories some areas as a 'District of Workforce Shortage' is criticised by the researchers for its weak designations and inherent limitations.

Studies in locational amenity (including that of McGrail et al 2011) typically include consideration of climate, proximity to coastline (or other water), low elevation, and/or proximity to snow, economic factors such as employment, infrastructure, socio-economic status, population growth, and housing price growth. Humphreys, Jones, Jones, Hugo, Bamford and Taylor (2001) identify proximity to capital cities and large regional centres, hospitals, and private schools as important amenity considerations.

5.5.7 Workplace Features

The trait of work features was included to encompass benefits such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design and modern technology. An exploration of the employment websites of each RUN universities revealed that some place emphasis on the workplace features that potential candidates could enjoy. For example:

- University of New England (Armidale campus) highlights its onsite hair dresser, news agent, post office, dry cleaning, general store, restaurant, brasserie, café, bar, bookshop, radio station, child care centre, on-site mosque and sporting precincts (University of New England, 2018b).
- University of Southern Queensland (2018b) points out that it offers (at some campuses) post offices, banking, food outlets, end of trip facilities (showers and bike storage) and free shuttle busses.
- The University of the Sunshine Coast (2018b) indicated that the Sippy Downs campus offers an "art gallery with free admission, cafes and shops, child care centre, shuttle bus linking the campus with local areas, and Sports precinct including a state of the art sports stadium with indoor courts, Olympic-standard heated swimming pool, gym, international standard athletics track and outdoor courts and playing fields.' (University of the Sunshine Coast, 2018). They also mention the campuses outdoor spaces, kangaroos and other wildlife (University of the Sunshine Coast, 2018).

Comprehensive literature search revealed little evidence workplace features contributed significantly to organisational attractiveness, but Waber, Magnolfi and Lindsay's (2014) article in the Harvard Business Review, Workspaces that Move People, discusses the benefits of office and workspace design to increasing communication, creativity, productivity and performance. Given the tendency of potential employees to appropriate perceptions of one aspect of a brand to the employer brand, impression of facilities may extrapolate to impression of the employer brand.

5.6 Summary

The literature presented in this chapter discusses employer attractiveness and employer branding. It provides a framework for determining those traits which may be developed and promoted to both existing employees and potential employees. This is valuable because, as explained in Chapter 4 of this thesis, human capital is an integral driver of strategy realisation, success and performance. In a bid to understand the potential employee decision making process, section 5.3 of this chapter equates the process of determining which employer they would like to work for in the same way they would consider another important consumer decision, suggesting that different brands fall into unknown, awareness, consideration and choice sets depending on the fulfilment of drivers. The penultimate goal of the process of employer branding is to develop an employee value proposition which constitutes a set of traits which an employee considers

valuable or attractive to employment. The decision making literature (section 5.3) suggests that compensatory decision making occurs, where the potential employee will 'trade-off' traits deemed to be not valuable, with those that are, in order to determine the suitability of employment with a particular organisation.

The literature regarding employer attractiveness, branding, and decision making has been considered in line with other studies of employer branding traits and the literature and data presented in Chapters 2 (The Academic Vocation), Chapter 3 (Regional Universities in the Australian Higher Education Context) and Chapter 4 (Human Capital in Academia) of this thesis to determine a set of traits for consideration in the qualitative interview phase of the research project. They traits identified were:

- Reputation (for research and teaching)
- Organisational Culture
- Job Design (research/teaching focus, autonomy, administrative workload)
- Career Development and Growth
- Job Security
- Workplace Features (e.g. gym, childcare, food, modern offices)
- Location

Reputation for research and teaching were included in response to the proliferation of league tables and rankings, differences in funding provision, and apparent unofficial stratification of higher education in Australia. This trait could be considered as largely unique to higher education, as reputation for other brands in other sectors may not be as readily based on such measures.

Organisational culture was included as a dominant trait in many of the other employer branding studies discovered in the literature. Organisational culture is also intrinsically tied to the strategic HRM and resource based view frameworks as they emphasise the centrality of staff in the achievement of objectives. Also, findings in the literature pertaining to academic job satisfaction, and particularly managerialism, and relevant as they present a particular form of organisational culture.

Job design was included with specific sub-categories to reflect the realities of academic work as highlighted in Chapter of this thesis. Much of the literate regarding academic job satisfaction points to concerns regarding elements of, and changes to job design. Job design factors also featured prominently as a trait in the employer branding investigations conducted by other researchers. The concepts of autonomy and administrative workload was included to reflect the concerns over new public management in academia highlighted in Chapter 2 of this thesis. Autonomy features in many of the other employer branding studies conducted by other researchers, while the administrative workload as a concern may be relatively unique to academia.

Career development and growth also featured prominent in the studies conducted by other researchers in their quests to discover desirable elements of the employer brand. It also reflects concerns regarding the academic vocation highlighted in Chapter 2 of this study, particular those which centred around the casualisation of the workforce and workload, which may in itself preclude the capacity to pursue career development and growth.

Workplace features such as gyms, childcare, food, and modern offices were included because they appear to feature quite prominently in recruitment media on the websites of universities.

The final trait, location, featured in many of the other employer branding studies cited in this chapter. Location is a principal focus of this PhD, as evidence such as that presented in Chapter 3 of this thesis exemplifies the challenges that regional universities face in attracting academic staff.

6.0 Research

The analysis of literature provided in the previous chapters indicates that attraction of talented academic staff is a strategic imperative for schools of business and law at Australia's universities, and that regional universities, in particular, may face impediments in their endeavours to attract talented human capital. The employer branding body of knowledge provides us with insights into the enhancement of attractiveness of an employer. While studies exist examining the attractiveness of academia itself, little is known about how academic staff evaluate different employers and determine their employer of choice.

The previous chapters provide a comprehensive examination of the theoretical frameworks and context for this study. This chapter focusses on the methodological framework, details the research instruments utilised, rationalises the design of the research instruments, explains data collection and sampling processes, profiles respondents and explains the analytical approach. The chapter also discusses the robustness of the research approach, and limitations of the study.

6.1 Research Approach

Crotty (1998) stipulates that researchers consider their epistemology, theoretical framework, and methodology when undertaking qualitative research. The epistemology defines the kind of knowledge attainable from the research, which leads to different theoretical perspectives. While Mann (2016, p.15) suggests that Crotty does not consider "the individual nature of research, the experiences of the researcher, and the undefined complex world that we are doing research in where there are competing or changing views", establishing epistemology (personal theory of knowledge) intrinsically requires consider of these individual factors.

However, Crotty (1998) does seem to believe that the individual's epistemology is indeed changeable, a notion disputed by Cowling (2016), who argues the fluidity of epistemological perspective, and further, choice of epistemological perspective depending on the research question. This study assumes a pragmatic research philosophy. In comparing five research philosophies used in business and management research, Saunders, Lewish and Thornhill (2016, p. 137) define pragmatism as "having a complex, rich, external ontology, where 'reality' is the practical consequences of ideas, and a flux of processes, experiences and practices." Saunders,

Lewis and Thornhill (2016, p. 137) suggest that epistemologically, pragmatism affords "practical meaning of knowledge in specific contexts", and emphasises "problem solving and informed future practice as contribution". Indeed, for the pragmatist, "research starts with a problem, and aims to contribute practical solutions that inform future practice (Saunders, Lewish and Thornhill (2016, p. 143). Axiologically, pragmatism is "researcher reflexive" and "initiated and sustained by researcher's doubts and beliefs", aligning with the researcher's inherent interest in this study given their role as a business academic at a regional Australian university. The research design utilised in this study aligns with a pragmatic mixed method, advocated by Morgan (2007) and Onwuegbuzie and Leech (2005), as a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods that emphasises methodology over philosophical concerns (Gliner, Morgan and Leech, 2016).

The research for this thesis is both descriptive (examining 'how are things now?'), and correlational (examining 'what is the relationship between …. And …?' (Zipf, 2016). Aligning with the mixed methods approach, there are two key elements to this research. The initial phase of the research is exploratory, aligning with an interpretive philosophy in an attempt to discover and gain insights into the perspective of participants in what organisation traits are attractive to potential employees. While the literature review had elucidated traits in other sectors, this phase was integral for the contextualisation of traits to the Australian higher education sector. The second phase is descriptive and explanatory, utilising a positivist approach to profile the desired employer traits of the participant and identify relationships between variables.

Creswell (2014) uses the term 'worldview' to define the guiding beliefs of research, and equates this to the notion of methodologies, epistemologies and ontologies and paradigms. Creswell (2014) highlights four key worldviews: postpositivism, transformative, constructivism and pragmatism. Whilst pragmatic, at the heart of this research is survey method, which implies a realist or post-positivist worldview given its intent to measure the reality of what exists 'out there' in the world.

Importantly, in both phases of this study, the researcher is an 'insider' and thus brings experience, knowledge and understanding of the context (Merton, 1972). The advantages of being an 'insider' include deeper understanding of contextual values, knowledge and power structures (Unluer, 2012). While an 'outsider' would have greater neutrality and objectivity (Yates, 2004), the

researcher brings theoretical sensitivity to this study, through deep exploration of the literature, engagement with face to face interviews, personal transcribing all interviews and their own background and experience as a business academic at regional Australian university. Kirpitchenko and Voloder (2014) discuss the complexities of identity in the false dichotomy of insider-outsider research, which is pertinent in this study as while the researcher is employed at a regional Australian university, the researcher lives and work in a metropolitan centre, but lived in a regional area from childhood through to early twenties. Nonetheless, the role of the researcher has implications for the study.

The theoretical approach used in this research design is Adaptive Theory (AT) (Layder, 1998). AT is both inductive and deducting, involving continuous interaction between orienting concepts, empirical data and emergent theory. The orienting concepts for this study were existing literature review regarding employer attractiveness and employer branding, supported by the deep tacit, intrinsic knowledge of the context held by the 'insider' researcher. The sequential mixed methods approach of the study aligns well with AT, which emphasises an iterative approach to the development of theory. Similarly, the research philosophy assumed through this research aligns well with AT, which considers the "interweaving of system elements (setting and contexts of activity) with the microfeatures (interpersonal encounters) of social life" (Layder, 1998, p. 144).

6.2 Research Design

The design of this research is exploratory sequential mixed method, which involves an initial exploratory research phase to investigate perspectives, which informs a second quantitative phase (Creswell, 2014; Saunders, Lewish and Thornhill, 2016). In responding to the principal research questions, this study deploys two phases of research, though the phases do not map directly to each research question. Instead, the first qualitative phase of the research is interpretivist, with an emphasis on understanding people in the environment and context in which they live and work. This exploratory phase is utilised to inform a secondary quantitative study, which moves along the continuum to a more postpositivist or realist epistemology. Both interviews and questionnaires are effective means for researchers to capture information regarding people's backgrounds and attitudes (Neuman, 2013).

The first phase of this research deploys a qualitative research strategy, and assumes an interpretive philosophy (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The design follows an inductive approach to theory development, drawing on literature and developing this further to meet the context and purpose of this study. Some researchers (such as Huber, 1995) have argued that the qualitative paradigm is unscientific, subjective, exploratory and overly influenced by political and socio-cultural circumstance. As Mann (2016, p. 21) explains, in the scientific world "quantitative, positivistic" research provides results that are "reliable, repeatable, and mathematically or statistically 'probable'", which qualitative research does not provide. In 2006, an article by Cassel and Symon was published titled 'Taking qualitative methods in organisation and management research seriously', eluding to its abnegation thus far. However, the article emphasised the view that qualitative research is "intrinsically credible, valuable and a worthy and insightful endeavour" (Cassel and Symon, 2006, p. 5). For Daymon and Holloway (2002), realistic and positivist research had dominated marketing research for a long time and it was time to open the door to qualitative studies, while Schoenfelder and Harris (2004) suggest that despite a reliance on quantitative techniques to explore perspectives on branding, the techniques were inadequate to inform practice. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) explain that a key purpose for mix methods design is initiative, where the initial methodology helps to "define the nature and scope of sequential […] research", "provide contextual background and to better understand the research problem". The initial phase also supports interpretation of the second phase, as it helps explain the relation between variables emerging from the other, and generalisability of the whole study, as it helps establish the credibility of the study and has produced more complete knowledge.

The first phase of the research utilises case study research, with RUN member institutions being the key focus. Case study research involves understanding "the dynamics of a topic […] within its setting or context (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016, p. 184). Neuman (2013, p. 42) explains that case study research "clarifies our thinking and allows us to link abstract ideas in specific ways with the concrete specifics of cases we observe in detail. It also enables us to calibrate or adjust the measures of our abstract concepts to actual lived experiences and widely accepted standards of evidence". Case study is a formidable tactic for deep exploration and understanding of an issue (Stake, 1995). Neuman (2013) explains key benefits to case studies: creation or modification of theory for complex cases or new situations; due to in-depth insight, more comprehensive

explanations of social life; and efficient depiction of complex situations. The following six strengths of case study research exist (Neuman 2013, p. 42):

> "1. Conceptual validity. Case studies help to 'flush out' and identify concepts/variables that are of greater interest and move toward their core or essential meaning in abstract theory.
>
> 2. Heuristic Impact. Case studies are highly heuristic (i.e. provide further learning, discovery or problem solving). They help with constructing new theories, developing or extending concepts, and exploring the boundaries among related concepts.
>
> 3. Causal mechanisms identification. Case studies have the ability to make visible the details of social processes and mechanisms by which one factor affects others.
>
> 4. Ability to capture complexity and trace processes. Case studies can effective depict complex, multiple-factors events/situations and trace processes over time and space.
>
> 5. Calibration. Case studies enable researchers to adjust measures of abstract concepts to dependable, lived experiences and concrete standards.
>
> 6. Holistic elaboration. Case studies can elaborate on an entire situation or process holistically and permit the incorporation of multiple perspectives or viewpoints."

While, for researchers such as Walton (1992, p. 129), "case studies are likely to produce the best theory", others such as Tight (2003) disregard them. The likes of Creswell (2014), Yin (2012) and Stake (1995) remain proponents of the method. Despite isolated queries over its suitability as an approach, case study method was effective in this study as it allowed the collection of in-depth data, the validation of existing research, and allowed for detailed exploration of the regional employment context. The case study used in phase one of this research was business and law early career academics and current PhD students at Australia's RUN institutions. To undertake the case study, the researcher followed a phenomenological research design where the researcher explored the opinions of individuals who had lived a particular experience (in this case, being affiliated with a RUN institution). Creswell (2014) notes that this approach typically involves conducting interviews, and this was the research instrument utilised in phase one of this study.

The second phase of the research utilises a quantitative research strategy with a positivist position. Saunders, Lewish and Thornhill (2016) explain that the questionnaire method used in this phase is "comparatively easy both to explain and to understand". The inclusion of the secondary quantitative phase remains interpretivist, as it collects opinion based data. This type of quantitative data is sometimes referred to as "qualitative numbers" (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016, p. 166).

6.3 Research Instruments

The interviews followed a semi-structured approach. Set questions were included, but there was opportunity to explore "other issues, concerns or questions" that arose during the interview (Best, 2012, p. 75). Prior to implementation, expert opinion was sought regarding the set questions, and questions honed to ensure that they elicited deep, meaningful responses. Pre-testing was conducted with trusted colleagues of the researcher who were not part of the target sample but had similar characteristics (primarily academics who had completed their PhDs shortly beyond five years). As Adams, Raeside and Khan (2014) note, effective interview practice requires preparation and practice, and pre-testing allows for the correction of errors and problems.

In designing the questionnaire, it was paramount that questions were clear and unambiguous (Adams, Raeside and Khan, 2014). To ensure the appropriateness of the design, expert opinion was sought by specialist statisticians and research leaders. A pilot questionnaire was initially tested on friends and colleagues (who again were close to, but not part of the target sample). In the preliminary stages of implementation, anecdotal feedback was sought from colleagues who were respondents.

6.4 Data Collection

Best (2014) identifies three key concerns with interviews: respondent concerns about the questions asked, meaning and significance not being shared between respondent and interviewer, and the respondent withholding information. To counter these concerns, Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) suggest that in qualitative studies, researchers "need to operate within a natural setting, or research context, in order to establish trust, participation, access to meanings

and in-depth understanding" and that success "is dependent not only on gaining physical access to participants but also building rapport and demonstrating sensibility to gain cognitive access to their data". To maintain the natural setting, and to enhance the development of rapport, all interviews were conducted face to face. This process involved the researcher travelling to Armidale, Coffs Harbour, Gold Coast, Lismore, Rockhampton, Sydney, the Sunshine Coast and Toowoomba, and conducting interviews in Brisbane where the researcher is based. Despite short stays at each location, exposure to the regional areas allowed the researcher to develop deeper understanding of the social and community implications of life in particular regional areas that that which would have been gathered through teleconference interviews. To ensure that enough time was spent with participants, the researcher dedicated three months 'in the field' dedicated to the in-depth interviews.

To counter issues of rationalisation, lack of awareness, fear of being shown up, and over-politeness, the researcher utilised probing and prompting (Best, 2012). Best (2012) explains that open questions are an ideal means to ascertain data about people's opinion, or meaning attached to a particular issue. Acting on the advice of Adams, Raeside, and Khan (2014, p. 147), the researcher was sure to use statements demonstrating active interest (such as 'that is very interesting'), smile and affirm the respondents input. All interviews were recorded on a digital recorder, allowing the researcher to focus on making observations, demonstrate active listening, and consider probing and prompting opportunities (Adams, Raeside and Khan, 2014). Permission was sought from all respondents before recording (Adams, Raeside and Khan, 2014).

Throughout the study, the actual names of Australian universities were used in questions. While some HRM research utilises fictitious organisations and scenarios (Bourhis and Mekkaoui, 2010), this approach may lead to outcomes which cannot be applied to real practice (Cable and Turban, 2003). Moreover, the approach does not allow the respondent to express their familiarity or impression of the employers in their industry, which research suggests is important in employer of choice decision making. Cable and Turban (2003) explain that this encourages confidence for the respondent, and enhances generalisation of findings.

The questionnaire was distributed online to perspective participants, as this allows for access from dispersed locations, without restrictions of time, and at low cost (Rea and Parker, 2005; de Leeuw, Hox and Dillman, 2008). Adams, Raeside, and Khan (2014) note that online

questionnaires may face reliability concerns because they may be victim to multiple responses, though mechanisms in the platform used (SurveyMonkey) mitigate this concern.

6.5 Sampling and Respondent Profile

Gliner, Morgan and Leech (2016, p. 137) explain that "sampling is the process of selecting part of a larger group of participants with the intent of generalizing from the sample (the smaller group) to the population (the larger group). To make valid inferences about the populations, we must select the sample so that it is representative of the total population". The target population in phase one of this study are current PhD students and early career academics at Schools of Business and Law at Australia's RUN member institutions. RUN member institutions were selected as a primary focus of this research is to understand what attracts academic staff to regional universities. Early career academics are defined as those who have completed their PhD within five years of the time of the interview. There were approximately 450 students enrolled in PhD programs in business and law at RUN institutions (Australian Government Department of Education and Training, 2018. Determining the number of early career academics at RUN institutions is complex. The university's own websites provide details of staff members, and the biography pages tend to include the individual's PhD completion year. Exploration of these websites in the months prior to the interviews being conducted revealed 31 academics who had completed their PhD in the last five years, with another 37 currently working on their PhD at either the institution where they were employed, or another university. In phase one, the accessible population was limited to those whose contact details were available through the universities' websites and everyone from the accessible population were added to the selected sample and asked to participate in the study. While some respondents offered referrals to other suitable participants, saturation was reached and further in-depth interviews not required at this stage.

All participants from the accessible population were included in the selected sample. The researcher expected that many would not accept the invitation to participate. Gliner, Morgan and Leech (2016) explain that there are many reasons that those in the selected sample do not progress: they decline to participate, are unreachable, or withdraw from the study. However, there was a high number of affirmative responses to the invitation to participate.

The actual sample consists of those respondents whose data is included in the results and analysis. For the first phase of this research, the actual sample was 50 respondents, consisting of 30 PhD students and 20 early career academics. The quantity of in-depth interviews conducted allowed for the voice of a diverse range of participants including current PhD students and early career academics, those born in different generations, those in regional locations and metropolitan locations, different gender, different countries of origin, marital status, parental status and discipline.

There were respondents from each RUN institution in both the current PhD student and early career academic segments. For PhD students, there was one respondent from Federation University, three from both University of the Sunshine Coast and University of New England, five from Central Queensland University, six from University of Southern Queensland and seven from Southern Cross University. There were five PhD student respondents currently working for a RUN institution, but completing their PhD at a non-RUN institution.

In the early career academic segment, there was one respondent from Federation University, three from the University of the Sunshine Coast and University of New England, four from Southern Cross University and University of Southern Queensland, and five from Central Queensland University.

Of the early career academics, twelve had completed their PhD at a non-RUN institution, one had completed at each of Central Queensland University, Federation University and University of the Sunshine Coast, two had completed their students at the University of New England, and three graduated from the University of Southern Queensland.

Of the 30 PhD students interviewed, 5 were not currently working at a university, 1 was working for Federation University, 3 for each of the University of the Sunshine Coast and Central Queensland University, and 6 for each of Southern Cross University, University of New England and University of Southern Queensland.

Many age generations were represented in the sample. Of the 30 PhD candidates, nine identified as being born between 1955 and 1964, fifteen between 1965 and 1981, and six between 1982 and 2000. Among the 20 early career academics, five identified as being born between 1955 and 1964, twelve between 1965 and 1983, and three between 1982 and 2000.

Many of the RUN institutions have campuses and staff located in metropolitan areas. The interviews captured responses from staff at both metropolitan and regional locations. Of the 30 PhD students, seven were based at a metropolitan location (Brisbane, Gold Coast or Sydney), while twenty-three were based in a regional location (Armidale, Ballarat, Coffs Harbour, Mackay, Rockhampton, Sunshine Coast or Toowoomba). Of the 20 early career academics, six were based at a metropolitan location while fourteen were based at a regional location.

The sample was diverse, including 18 female and 12 male PhD candidates, 10 female and 10 male early career academics. 13 of the PhD candidates identified Australia as their country of origin, while 17 identified a country other than Australia. Of the early career academics, 12 identified a country other than Australia, and 8 identified Australia as their country of origin. 11 of the PhD students and 12 of the early career academics indicated that they were a parent/guardian/caregiver of dependent children. 19 PhD students and 8 early career academics indicated that they were not the parent/guardian/caregiver of dependent children.

Academic staff and PhD students from a range of disciplines with business and law participated, consisting of three early career academics and three PhD students from the accounting and economics discipline, 6 early career academics and 8 PhD students from law, 3 early career academics and 8 PhD students from management and HRM, 7 early career academics and 5 PhD students from Marketing and Tourism, 1 early career academic and 6 PhD students from other disciplines (finance, information systems, property, public policy and sustainability).

While some respondents were not currently working at university, others were employed casually, on part time or full time contracts, and others were employed in either full time or part time permanent positions. Of the 30 PhD candidates, 3 based in metropolitan locations were not currently working and 2 in regional locations were not currently working. 10 were engaged in casual employment, with 9 based in a metropolitan area and 1 regionally. Only one PhD respondent was employment on a contract basis, part time and in a metropolitan area. One PhD respondent was appointed to a permanent part-time role, based in a regional location. 13 PhD respondents were employed in full time permanent roles, 1 in a metropolitan location, and 12 in regional locations. For the early career academics, 4 based in metropolitan locations and 8 in regional locations were employed in full time permanent roles. 5 staff were on contract, with 2 in full time contract roles in a metropolitan location,

and 3 in full time contract roles in a regional location. 3 early career academics were working in casual roles in regional locations.

Table 6-1 Key Characteristics of Interview Respondents

		Count of Early Career Academics	Count of PhD Students
Total Number of Respondents		20	30
Host University (for current or completed PhD)	Central Queensland University	1	5
	Federation University	1	1
	Southern Cross University	0	7
	University of New England	2	3
	University of Southern Queensland	3	6
	University of the Sunshine Coast	1	3
	Non-RUN Institution	12	5
Current Workplace	Central Queensland University	5	3
	Federation University	1	1
	Southern Cross University	4	6
	University of New England	3	6
	University of Southern Queensland	4	6
	University of the Sunshine Coast	3	3
	Not at a university	-	5
Year of Birth	1955-1964	5	9
	1965-1981	12	15
	1982-2000	3	6
Country of Birth	Australia	8	13
	Overseas	12	17
Location	Regional	14	23
	Metropolitan	6	7
Gender	Female	10	18
	Male	10	12
	Other / Not Disclosed	0	0
Discipline Area	Accounting & Economics	3	3
	Law	6	8
	Management & Human Resource Management	3	8
	Marketing & Tourism	7	5
	Other Disciplines	1	6

The target population in phase two of the study was PhD students and early career at academics at Schools of Business and Law at Australia's universities who intend to pursue a career as an academic at an Australian university. Data obtained from the Australian Government Department of Education and Training reveals that between 2011 and 2015, approximately 3177 people completed a PhD in

Management, Commerce and Law. Across all of Australia's universities, approximately 5,057 students were enrolled in a PhD in Management, Commerce or Law in 2015. Edwards, Bexley and Richardson's (2011, p.32) paper discussing the findings of the National Research Student Survey revealed that, at 63 per cent, PhD students in management and commerce have the highest levels of medium to long term career ambition in academic positions. If these percentages are applied to the populations sizes of 3177 and 5057, the revised target population sizes are 2002 and 3186 respectively. The study Edwards, Bexley and Richardson's (2011, p.29) also found that of those indicating an intention to work in academia, around 55 per cent of international students and 70 per cent of domestic students were hoping to stay in Australia in the immediate future. When asked what they thought was realistic, around 45 per cent of international students, and around 85 per cent of domestic students indicated plans to stay in Australia. In the medium-long term, these numbers dropped to around 30 per cent for international students and 70 per cent for domestic students. Specific data for management, commerce and law was not available. Applying the maximum percentage of intention to stay in Australia (85 per cent) the target populations sizes drop to a maximum of 1701 current PhD students and 2708 early career academics.

As with phase one, the accessible population was initially limited to those whose contact details were available through the universities' websites. In identify early career academics, often the staff member's webpage included a date for their PhD completion. When no date was provided, the individual's name was cross referenced with theses available through the National Library of Australia's Trove website, however, those who had changed their name since their thesis was published on Trove were unable to be verified. For individuals who had completed their PhDs in the previous five years, but not working in academia despite intention to do so, or working in academia yet not appearing on the university's website (which is often the case for sessional staff) were not accessible. The initial sampling method was also unable to identify current PhD students whose details were not listed on their university's website. To increase the accessible sample, snowballing was also used. There were 236 early career academic respondents to the questionnaire, equating to a confidence level of 95 per cent and margin of error of 6, given the population of 2,708. Approximately 8.7 per cent of the population completed the questionnaire. There were 304 current PhD respondents, approximately 17 per cent of the population, equating to a confidence level of 95 and margin of error of 5.

Table 6-2 Key Characteristics of Questionnaire Respondents

		Count of Early Career Academics	Count of PhD Students
	Total Number of Respondents	236	304
Year of Birth	1946-1954	4	10
	1955-1964	38	50
	1965-1981	106	124
	1982-2000	88	120
Country of Birth	Australia	107	127
	Overseas	129	177
Location	Adelaide	8	3
	Armidale	2	5
	Ballarat	2	3
	Bathurst	3	2
	Brisbane	29	54
	Canberra	5	17
	Darwin	2	2
	Geelong	1	0
	Gold Coast	15	22
	Hobart	5	18
	Melbourne	74	53
	Newcastle	1	5
	Perth	13	6
	Rockhampton	3	4
	Sunshine Coast	4	4
	Sydney	44	84
	Toowoomba	5	4
	Townsville	1	1
	Wollongong	6	2
	Launceston	1	4
	Other	12	11
Gender	Female	134	164
	Male	101	136
	Other / Not Disclosed	1	4
Discipline Area	Accounting	47	48
	Agribusiness	2	0
	Communication	2	0
	Economics	16	19
	Entrepreneurship and Innovation	5	4
	Finance	22	19
	Human Resource Management	13	11
	Information Systems	11	13
	Law	38	72
	Leadership	2	5

	Logistics	2	2
	Management	19	31
	Marketing	30	36
	Operations Management	1	1
	Organisational Behaviour / Organisational Studies	10	6
	Project Management	0	2
	Property	1	2
	Strategy	3	4
	Tourism	7	20
	Statistics and Actuarial Studies	2	1
	Other Disciplines	3	8

There were 540 questionnaire responses, 304 from current PhD students and 236 from early career academics. Of the 304 current PhD students, 164 identified as female, 136 male and 4 other. Of the 236 early career academics, 134 identified as female, 101 as male and 1 other. 10 PhD students were born between 1946 and 1954, 50 between 1955 and 1964, 124 between 1965 and 1981, and 120 between 1982 and 2000. Among the early career academics, 4 were born between 1946 and 1954, 38 between 1955 and 1964, 106 between 1965 and 1981, and 88 between 1982 and 2000.127 current PhD students and 107 early career academics were born in Australia. 177 of the current PhD students and 129 of the early career academics were born overseas. Marital status data was collected. Of the early career academics, 47 were single, 135 married, 36 partnered, 11 divorced and 1 other. Among the PhD candidates, 58 single, 163 married, 55 partnered, 2 widowed, 6 separated, 17 divorced and 3 other. 116 of the current PhD students, and 109 of the early career academics, were the parent, guardian or carer for any dependents.

The occupation of respondent's partners, the partner's salary and the highest qualification of partners was also collected. Of the 217 PhD students with a partner, 30 partners were working as a manager, 113 as a professional, 12 as a technical or trade worker, 11 as a community or personal services worker, 7 in a clerical or administrative role, 1 as a sales worker, 3 as a machinery operator or driver, 5 as a labourer and 35 were not currently employed. 54 of the partners earnt less than $40,000 per annum, 29 from $40,000 to almost $60,000, 29 from $60,000 to almost $80,000, 31 from $80,000 to almost $105,000, 53 more than $105,000, and 21 unsure. In terms of partner's highest qualification, 2 were unsure, 1 had completed none of the following, 24 a research higher degree, 84 a postgraduate degree, 75 an undergraduate degree, 21 a vocational qualification and 10 a high school certificate. For the early career academics, 16 were working as a manager, 97 as a professional, 11 as a technical or trade worker, 6 as a community or personal services worker, 4 as a sales worker, 1 as a machinery operator or driver,

and 26 were not currently employed. 31 of the partners earnt less than $40,000 per annum, 18 from $40,000 to almost $60,000, 32 from $60,000 to almost $80,000, 36 from $80,000 to almost $105,000, 41 more than $105,000, and 12 unsure. In terms of partner's highest qualification, 3 had completed none of the following, 29 a research higher degree, 66 a postgraduate degree, 43 an undergraduate degree, 21 a vocational qualification and 8 a high school certificate.

For those studying their PhD, the hosting institutions allowed for each university to be represented (see table below). One respondent was completing their PhD through an overseas institution.

Table 6-3 Host Institution of PhD Respondents

Questionnaire: At which institution are you completing your PhD?					
		Frequency	**Per cent**	**Valid Per cent**	**Cumulative Per cent**
Valid	Other	1	.2	.3	.3
	Australian Catholic University	1	.2	.3	.7
	Australian National University	14	2.6	4.6	5.3
	Bond University	6	1.1	2.0	7.2
	Central Queensland University	6	1.1	2.0	9.2
	Charles Darwin University	2	.4	.7	9.9
	Charles Sturt University	3	.6	1.0	10.9
	Curtin University	2	.4	.7	11.5
	Deakin University	3	.6	1.0	12.5
	Federation University Australia	4	.7	1.3	13.8
	Flinders University	1	.2	.3	14.1
	Griffith University	24	4.4	7.9	22.0
	James Cook University	2	.4	.7	22.7
	LaTrobe University	7	1.3	2.3	25.0
	Macquarie University	2	.4	.7	25.7
	Monash University	9	1.7	3.0	28.6
	Murdoch University	2	.4	.7	29.3
	Queensland University of Technology	2	.4	.7	29.9
	RMIT University	14	2.6	4.6	34.5
	Southern Cross University	3	.6	1.0	35.5
	University of Adelaide	2	.4	.7	36.2
	University of Canberra	7	1.3	2.3	38.5
	University of Melbourne	20	3.7	6.6	45.1
	University of New England	2	.4	.7	45.7
	University of New South Wales	43	8.0	14.1	59.9

	University of Newcastle	5	.9	1.6	61.5
	University of Queensland	39	7.2	12.8	74.3
	University of Southern Queensland	5	.9	1.6	76.0
	University of Sydney	14	2.6	4.6	80.6
	University of Tasmania	24	4.4	7.9	88.5
	University of Technology Sydney	13	2.4	4.3	92.8
	University of the Sunshine Coast	4	.7	1.3	94.1
	University of Western Australia	3	.6	1.0	95.1
	University of Western Sydney	8	1.5	2.6	97.7
	University of Wollongong	6	1.1	2.0	99.7
	Victoria University	1	.2	.3	100.0
	Total	304	56.3	100.0	
Missing	System	236	43.7		
Total		540	100.0		

Data was collected to indicate how long ago early career academics had completed their PhDs. Percentages for each year ranged from 7.4 per cent to 10.6 per cent (see table below).

Table 6-4 How Long Ago Respondents Completed PhD

Questionnaire: How long ago did you complete your PhD?					
		Frequency	**Per cent**	**Valid Per cent**	**Cumulative Per cent**
Valid	Less than 1 year ago	47	8.7	19.9	19.9
	1 to almost 2 years ago	57	10.6	24.2	44.1
	2 to almost 3 years ago	45	8.3	19.1	63.1
	3 to almost 4 years ago	40	7.4	16.9	80.1
	4 to almost 5 years ago	47	8.7	19.9	100.0
	Total	236	43.7	100.0	
Missing	System	304	56.3		
Total		540	100.0		

The host institution for the early career academic respondent's completed PhD was also collected. Each university was represented (see below). Of the 32 other respondents, 31 were overseas institutions while one respondent preferred not to specify.

Table 6-5 Institution Where Respondents Completed PhD

Questionnaire: At which institution did you complete your PhD?

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	Other (please specify)	32	5.9	13.6	13.6
	Australian National University	4	.7	1.7	15.3
	Bond University	5	.9	2.1	17.4
	Central Queensland University	1	.2	.4	17.8
	Charles Darwin University	1	.2	.4	18.2
	Charles Sturt University	1	.2	.4	18.6
	Curtin University	2	.4	.8	19.5
	Deakin University	7	1.3	3.0	22.5
	Federation University Australia	2	.4	.8	23.3
	Flinders University	1	.2	.4	23.7
	Griffith University	12	2.2	5.1	28.8
	James Cook University	1	.2	.4	29.2
	LaTrobe University	3	.6	1.3	30.5
	Macquarie University	6	1.1	2.5	33.1
	Monash University	21	3.9	8.9	41.9
	Murdoch University	3	.6	1.3	43.2
	Queensland University of Technology	11	2.0	4.7	47.9
	RMIT University	12	2.2	5.1	53.0
	Southern Cross University	3	.6	1.3	54.2
	University of Adelaide	4	.7	1.7	55.9
	University of Canberra	2	.4	.8	56.8
	University of Melbourne	8	1.5	3.4	60.2
	University of New England	3	.6	1.3	61.4
	University of New South Wales	18	3.3	7.6	69.1
	University of Newcastle	2	.4	.8	69.9
	University of Queensland	12	2.2	5.1	75.0
	University of South Australia	4	.7	1.7	76.7
	University of Southern Queensland	3	.6	1.3	78.0
	University of Sydney	11	2.0	4.7	82.6
	University of Tasmania	6	1.1	2.5	85.2
	University of Technology Sydney	8	1.5	3.4	88.6
	University of the Sunshine Coast	5	.9	2.1	90.7
	University of Western Australia	5	.9	2.1	92.8
	University of Western Sydney	8	1.5	3.4	96.2
	University of Wollongong	6	1.1	2.5	98.7
	Victoria University	3	.6	1.3	100.0
	Total	236	43.7	100.0	
Missing	System	304	56.3		
Total		540	100.0		

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate the discipline that they are most closely aligned to. Of the PhD candidates, there were 48 aligned to accounting, 19 to economics, 4 to entrepreneurship and innovation, 19 to finance, 11 to HRM, 13 to information systems, 72 to law, 5 to leadership, 2 to logistics, 31 to management, 36 to marketing, 1 to operations management, 6 to organisational behaviour/organisational studies, 2 to project management, 2 to property, 4 to strategy, 20 to tourism, 1 to statistics and actuarial studies, and 8 to other fields. Among the early career academics, there were 47 linked to accounting, 2 to agribusiness, 2 to communications, 16 to economics, 5 to entrepreneurship and innovation, 22 to finance, 13 to HRM, 11 to information systems, 38 to law, 2 to leadership, 2 to logistics, 19 to management, 30 to marketing, 1 to operations management, 10 to organisational behaviour/organisational studies, 1 to property, 3 to strategy, 7 to tourism, 2 to statistics and actuarial science and 3 to other.

Respondents were asked to identify where they currently lived. There were as a range of responses to this question. Capital city metropolitan locations such as Adelaide (11) Brisbane (83), Canberra (22), Darwin (4), Hobart (23), Melbourne (127), Perth (19), Sydney (128) yielded large numbers, consistent with their population size and large university presence. Other metropolitan centres, Bathurst (5), Geelong (1), Gold Coast (37), Launceston (5), Newcastle (6), Townsville (2), Wollongong (8) were also represented. RUN institution home campus locations of Armidale (7) Ballarat (5), Rockhampton (7), Sunshine Coast (8) and Toowoomba (9) also yielded responses. 23 respondents indicated 'other' as their location. Of the 540 total responses (both early career academics and current PhD students), 412 had never lived inland regional location, 58 had done so but for less than 5 years, 66 had for more than 5 years, and 4 did not respond. 394 had never lived in a coastal regional town, 58 had done so but for less than 5 years, 84 had for more than 5 years, and 4 did not respond. 72 had never lived in a metropolitan city of Australia, 134 had done so for less than 5 years, 329 had for more than 5 years, and 5 did not respond.

The respondents were currently employed at a range of universities. The table below indicates where the respondents were currently employed. Note that some work at 2 or 3 universities. 477 respondents worked at one university, 15 respondents at 2 universities and 6 respondents at 3 universities. 42 did not respond.

Table 6-6 Number of Individuals Employed at Each University

Questionnaire: Count of individuals currently employed at each university. Note that some work at 2 or 3 universities.	
Australian Catholic University	5
Australian National University	13
Bond University	19
Central Queensland University	11
Charles Darwin University	4
Charles Sturt University	8
Curtin University	4
Deakin University	16
Edith Cowan University	0
Federation University Australia	4
Flinders University	4
Griffith University	35
James Cook University	4
LaTrobe University	11
Macquarie University	13
Monash University	34
Murdoch University	7
Queensland University of Technology	18
RMIT University	30
Southern Cross University	6
Swinburne University of Technology	0
University of Adelaide	4
University of Canberra	6
University of Melbourne	24
University of New England	7
University of New South Wales	37
University of Newcastle	6
University of Notre Dame	3
University of Queensland	35
University of South Australia	3
University of Southern Queensland	14

University of Sydney	32
University of Tasmania	25
University of Technology Sydney	25
University of the Sunshine Coast	12
University of Western Australia	10
University of Western Sydney	20
University of Wollongong	10
Victoria University	6
Other	4
None	23

Many of the staff had previously worked at other universities. While 258 had only worked at only one other university, 74 had worked at 2 universities, 32 at 3 universities, 8 at 4 universities, 5 at 5 universities, and 1 at 6 universities. 162 had not previously worked at another university. The table below shows the count of individuals previously employed at each university (note that some may have worked at 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 universities).

Table 6-7 Number of Individuals Previously Employed at Each University

Questionnaire: Count of individuals previous employed at each university. Note that some may have worked at 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 universities.	
Australian Catholic University	10
Australian National University	20
Bond University	11
Central Queensland University	18
Charles Darwin University	5
Charles Sturt University	6
Curtin University	7
Deakin University	16
Edith Cowan University	2
Federation University Australia	7
Flinders University	1
Griffith University	36
James Cook University	4

LaTrobe University	12
Macquarie University	19
Monash University	40
Murdoch University	5
Queensland University of Technology	22
RMIT University	18
Southern Cross University	7
Swinburne University of Technology	7
University of Adelaide	7
University of Canberra	7
University of Melbourne	33
University of New England	4
University of New South Wales	43
University of Newcastle	7
University of Notre Dame	4
University of Queensland	32
University of South Australia	6
University of Southern Queensland	9
University of Sydney	40
University of Tasmania	18
University of Technology Sydney	26
University of the Sunshine Coast	7
University of Western Australia	7
University of Western Sydney	22
University of Wollongong	9
Victoria University	11
Other	36
None	140

6.6 Analysis

In the interview phase, initial analysis occurred following a first batch of completed interviews. The researcher personally transcribed each interview to enhance familiarity with responses. This initial analysis was conducted to test the value of the interview process. Upon the completion of

all interviews, all interviews were verbatim transcribed by the researcher. Following transcription, content analysis was conducted to identify key themes identified. The first question in the interview was an open question intended to explore primacy for the respondent ("What makes one university more attractive to work for than another?").

The second question involved showing the respondent the traits identified through the literature review process and contextualised to the Australian higher education sector by the researcher ("Do you think anything is missing from this list of factors that might make one university more attractive to work for than another?"). Central tendency, which involves identification of the most popular response given (Best, 2012), was utilised when considering responses to this question.

Follow up questions were asked to provide additional detail and depth to the qualitative phase of the research. These responses were coded according to the organisational traits to which the input best related. Thematic analysis involves the identification, analysis, organisation, description and reporting of themes within a data set (Nowell, Norris, White and Moules, 2017). It provides a rich and detailed account of data (Nowell, Norris, White and Moules, 2017). While some recognise that the flexibility inherent to thematic analysis is problematic in its possible lack of coherence and inconsistency (Holloway and Todres, 2003), the adaptive theory approach of this study, the insider role of the researcher and efforts to sustain objectivity and truthfulness ensure credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Nowell, Norris, White and Moules, 2017).

Analysis for the questionnaire phase of the study was conducted using SPSS. Many of the questions utilise likert scales, which are considered both easy to answer and analyse (Adams, Raeside and Khan, 2014). The data collected provides comprehensive descriptive statistics, which is able to be analysed to provide inferential statistics for the population. In the analysis, Chi-square tests are used to determine the likelihood of variables being independent (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Bivariate (Pearson) correlation is used to test the strength of relationships (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Independent group *t*-tests are used to compare the difference in the means of two groups using a measure of the spread of scores (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). Bonferroni t-Tests are used to decrease the risk of finding difference when there is none (Cleophas and Zwinderman, 2011). One-way analysis of variance (or one-way ANOVA) is used to compare the means within and between groups of data (Saunders, Lewis and

Thornhill, 2016). Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) is also conducted when several depend variables are considered.

6.7 Ethics

Prior to conducting the interviews and questionnaire for this research project, ethics approval was sought. The ethics application was deemed minimal risk, and approval granted. The University of Melbourne Office for Research Ethics and Integrity advises students to provide a Plain Language Statement and Consent form to participants. These were distributed via email to interview participants, and on the front page of the questionnaire and the email invitation and in the questionnaire phase.

6.8 Objectivity and Truthfulness

Creswell (2014) explains that objectivity and truthfulness are key tenants in both qualitative and quantitative research traditions. In qualitative studies, the key parameters are around believability, "based on coherence, insight and instrumental utility" (Eisner, 1991, cited in Creswell, 2014, p. 206), and trustworthiness (Lincoln and Guba, 1985, cited in Creswell, 2014).

Coherence, as highlighted by Eisner (1991), is concerned with how well the study fits together as a whole. The adaptive theory approach, grounded in the researcher's lived experience, consolidated by comprehensive literature review, explored and focussed by the in-depth interviews phase, and examined through the online questionnaire phase ensure that this research project is coherent and the findings persuasive.

For a study to be insightful, the meaning of data collected must be made evident. According to Eisner (1997, p. 52), this requires rationality, or "the exercise of intelligence in the creation or perception of elements as they relate to the whole in which they participate". This question for insight is another driver for the adaptive theory approach utilised, in that it allows the researcher the background knowledge and understanding to astutely rationalise data in order to extract meaning.

Eisner (1997, p. 58) explains that a study can be considered to have instrumental utility if it can "help us understand a situation". The stated of aim of this research is to determine the desired employer traits of prospective and early career business and law academics in Australia, and importantly, utilise these findings to enhance the attractiveness of regional universities to potential employees. By providing a comprehensive insight into the situation at hand, and exploring the views of prospective and early career academic staff in business and law at Australia's regional universities, this study provides guidance to enhance employer attractiveness.

Nowell, Norris, White and Moules (2017, p.1) explain that it is imperative that qualitative research "is conducted in a rigorous and methodical matter to yield meaningful and useful results". They go on to explain that to be considered trustworthy, analysis must be "conducted in a precise, consistent and exhaustive manner". Following the advice of Nowell, Norris, White and Moules (2017, p.1), this research provides a transparent communication of how thematic data analysis has occurred.

In conducting interviews, to avoid bias and errors, Adams, Raeside and Khan (2014, p. 148) suggest three key tactics: "getting to know the interviewees and their 'social context'", "motivating individuals to respond" and "using appropriate questioning techniques". To meet requirements of the first tactic, the researcher first emailed the potential respondent, and then travelled to meet personally with the researcher. Prior to meeting, the researcher explored the respondent's profile page on the university website. Where travel was required, the researcher was accommodated in that location overnight or longer. To motivate the respondent, the researcher emphasised the value of the study and its applicability to regional university success. Appropriate questioning techniques were ensured by conducting pre-testing, and listening back to interviews shortly after their completion to allow reflection.

Creswell (2013) emphasises the importance of the role of the researcher in the research process. The researcher is an 'insider' in this study, which leads to concerns identity duality; the researcher being unable to see the big picture, overlooking findings or making assumptions; and respondents assuming the researcher's understanding (Unluer, 2012). Concerns over identify were addressed through transparency, with respondents clearly advised of the researcher's role as a student in this study, while also holding a position as an academic at a regional Australian

university. As such, throughout the study, it was important for the researcher to maintain a panoptical view of the research question. To mitigate concerns regarding respondents assuming researcher understand, a preventative approach was deployed during the interviews, using probing and prompting to ensure comprehensive responses (Best, 2012).

Validity in exploratory sequential mixed methods designs requires the researcher to check for validity of both qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, 2014). A key concern is that the researcher may not follow appropriate steps in the development of a secondary psychometric assessment instrument (Creswell, 2014). To counter this concern, the researcher conducted rigorous analysis of the qualitative data prior to commencement of design of the quantitative questionnaire. Expert opinion was sought in the design. Creswell (2014) warns against collecting scale or instrument data for the same sample respondents in both the qualitative and quantitative phases of a study, so the online questionnaire design was specifically tailored to guard against undue duplication of responses. To ensure validity:

- on keeping with the adaptive theory approach, triangulation was conducted to compare the primacy thematic analysis outcomes with those anticipated by the insider researcher following literature review.
- Similarly, when a small number of online questionnaire responses was received, the results were compared with the thematic findings of the interviews and the established theory for the purposes of triangulation.
- The accuracy of qualitative findings was tested with member checking (Creswell, 2014).
- Rich, think descriptions are used (Creswell, 2014), incorporating direct quotes of participants.
- The bias of the researcher is clarified (Creswell, 2014).
- Prolonged time was spent in the field (Creswell, 2014), with three months dedicated to face to face interviews.

Qualitative reliability considers the applicability of the research design to other researchers or projects (Creswell, 2014). It is foreseeable that the research design utilised in this study could be conducted again periodically to examine changes in the target population's responses, or conducted in other academic fields to explore differences, or adapted for study of another

vocational group. Similar qualitative interviews have been used to explore attitudes towards employer brands, while other researchers have used quantitative questionnaires.

6.9 Limitations

The research conducted in this study is cross-sectional, aligning with the descriptive and correlational nature of the research questions. There is no intent in this study to capture change or social process, though this may be possible in a later longitudinal study of participants.

The confidence level goal for this research was 95 per cent, as this is commonly accepted for large samples because 95 per cent of values are within 1.96 standard deviations of the mean for any normal distribution (Peck, Olsen and Devore, 2008). The goal margin of error for this study was 5 per cent. As such, for the early career academic population of 2708, the target sample was 337 respondents, but unfortunately, only 236 responses were collected. For the current PhD student population of 1,701, with a confidence level of 95 per cent and margin of error of 5 per cent, the target sample size was 314, and 304 current PhD students respondents completed the questionnaire. With this in mind, the margin of error for the early career academic respondents was increased to 6. As such, the results must be interpreted with some caution. The lower number of responses is attributable to a low acceptable rate of the target population, along with the inherently limited capacity to identify perspective participants from the publicly available student and staff directory website of the universities studied. It is recognised that these websites may not contain up to date or complete information. Cross-checks with the National Library of Australia Trove website (http:// trove.nla.gov.au), which contains the theses of most recent PhDs completed in Australia, helped to minimise errant invitations, and confirm the validity of some respondents. Snowball sampling was also used to increase the response rate. However, it was impossible to identify or contact individuals who had completed their PhDs in the past five years (i.e. were not current students) but not currently working in academic roles, or are working in academic roles at Australian universities but do not have details available on the university's website and were not referred by snowballing. It is noted that sessional academic staff often do not have their details published on the university's website.

6.10 Summary

This study assumes a pragmatic research approach, and follows an exploratory, sequential mixed methods design. The first phase of the study is a qualitative case study interview approach following an interpretivist epistemology, while the second is a larger quantitative online questionnaire within the postpositivist epistemology. As an insider, the researcher deploys adaptive theory to allow continued engagement between established theory and empirical findings. Fifty face-to-face interviews were conducted with prospective and early career business or law academics at Australia's RUN institutions. With the online questionnaire sent to prospective and early career business or law academics at all of Australia's universities, 540 responses were collected. The study followed ethics guidelines and ensured objectivity and truthfulness of the data and analysis by following recommended guidelines and procedures.

7.0 Interview Results

This chapter presents results discovered through the first stage of the sequential, mixed methods approach used in this thesis. The principal intent of the interviews was to validate the traits identified by the researcher following the comprehensive literature review provided in Chapters 2 to 5 of this thesis. Effectively, this would ensure that a robust, validated set of employer traits was utilised in the secondary qualitative phase of the study. Entering into the interview phase, the following employer traits were used:

- Reputation (for research and teaching)
- Organisational Culture
- Job Design (research/teaching focus, autonomy, administrative workload)
- Job Security
- Career, Development and Growth
    - Opportunities to work overseas on projects or exchange
    - Opportunities to lead projects and tasks
    - Opportunities to learn from colleagues
    - Opportunities for fast promotion
- Location
- Workplace Features (e.g. gym, childcare, food, modern offices)

This set of traits was developed through consideration of those used in other studies, and the identification of factors particularly pertinent in higher education in Australia in research

regarding academic job satisfaction and the attractiveness of the academic vocation (Chapter 2 of this thesis) in particular.

There were two key questions asked during the semi-structured interviews. The first question was designed to examine primacy, and asked the question 'What makes one university more attractive to work for than another?'. The second question in the interview was to test the validity of the organisational traits identified by the researcher through the literature review process, prior to their inclusion in the online questionnaire. Subsequent questions were designed to further explore the respondent's attitudes towards the various organisational traits.

Respondents expressed a range of responses to the first question. Location was the primary organisational trait identified by 12 respondents, while 11 highlighted the organisational reputation as paramount. A positive organisational culture was emphasised by 7 respondents. Autonomy and other job design features, along with opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development were each indicated by 4 respondents. Expert colleagues to learn from/work with was indicated on 3 occasions, along with performance/support/opportunity in research. The following organisational traits also yielded one primary research each:

- High Salary
- Secure / permanent / tenured employment
- Performance/support/opportunity in teaching;
- Job including or allowing for work/life balance
- Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design and modern technology;
- Leadership.

All organisational traits identified in the examination of primacy were included in the organisational traits in the subsequent questionnaire phase of the study, with leadership embedded within the delineation of the organisational culture traits.

The second interview question asked was, "Consider this list of organisational traits that contribute to the attractiveness of a university as an employer. Do you think anything is missing? Is there anything on the list that should not be?". The list of organisational traits presented was:

- Reputation (for research and teaching)
- Organisational Culture
- Job Design (research/teaching focus, autonomy, administrative workload)
- Job Security
- Career, Development and Growth
    - Opportunities to work overseas on projects or exchange
    - Opportunities to lead projects and tasks
    - Opportunities to learn from colleagues
    - Opportunities for fast promotion
- Location
- Workplace Features (e.g. gym, childcare, food, modern offices)

The vast majority of respondents indicated that the list was comprehensive. Only two respondents saw flaws in the list, with one suggesting the inclusion of pay conditions and travel time to and from work as necessary inclusions, and the other suggesting that the list was suitable for a different demographic to her own, and was particularly concerned about the terminology of 'fast' promotion. In response to this feedback:

- 'High Salary' was added to the list of traits. Salary was discussed with many other respondents, and while the similarity of remuneration across the sector were recognised, salary was still seen as an important determinant by some respondents.
- 'Location' was divided into 'Employer's Inner Metropolitan Australia location', 'Employer's Outer Metropolitan Australia location', 'Employer's Inland regional Australia location' and 'Employer's Coastal regional Australia location'. It is seen by the researcher that travel time is inherent to the location, and the additional trait unnecessary.
- Variance in demographic responses is highlighted in the results section for the questionnaire.
- The term 'fast' was removed, and terminology altered to 'Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development'.

There were recommendations to include the following:

- Performance/support/opportunity in research.
- Expert colleagues to learn from/work with

- Reputation/status/rank of my discipline/school/department.
- Social responsibility/community engagement/public good.

Qualitative interview responses were examined thematically, coded using the organisational traits which emerged through the study.

7.1 Reputation/Status/Rank of the University

The trait of reputation/status/rank of the university was originally referred to as simply 'Reputation for research/teaching'. However, its inclusion was tied to the prevalence of rankings, accreditations, and competition for funding with the higher education sector in Australia. It was also intended to reference the unofficial stratification of universities in Australia, and the link to reputation for these constructs. The terminology in the qualitative phase was deliberately designed to allow respondents to indicate feelings or thoughts on whether this was a dichotomy, along with the relative importance of the reputation of the university. Feedback from interview respondents resulted in the clarification of including status and rank in the descriptor, to avoid any confusion as to whether this could relate to reputation for public good or some other factor. Indeed, the expected dichotomy of attitudes towards research and teaching was expressed by respondents, which informed the separation of this trait in the qualitative questionnaire phase.

The reputation of the university was referred to by respondents also as status or rank. Reputation was recognised as an important endeavour for those with high-performance aspirations in research. As one respondent explained:

> *"Reputation for research and teaching is going to be paramount for people who really want to fly, academically."*

The following quotes indicate that moving to a more reputable institution was seen as an upward career trajectory:

> *"If I had to go to a different university I would want one of the Group 8s, with a good reputation, because that would be stepping to a higher level."*

"If I had to leave, I would choose Australian National University. Of course, the top rank, you can say a Go8 university would take priority. Any of the G8 universities. Ranking is extremely important, you know, because University of Melbourne, University of Queensland, you can say these are the must haves in the market."

"For career oriented people universities in cities would be more attractive to work for because you've got the sandstones. Their dream is to get to a sandstone. Most academics have got big egos, in case you didn't notice. I think that's just an ego thing. They work at a sandstone, they work at a Go8 university so they see that as having more credence, better for their reputation."

"You will at some stage move on and the reputation of where you are working helps in getting jobs elsewhere."

"It looks good on your resume to work at an organisation that's considered to be highly reputable, especially in terms of research, because that's the pathway to moving up."

It would appear that respondents linked reputation with career development and growth, as it was seen as a positive career move to be associated with a more research-intensive university.

Respondents also emphasised that success in achieving research goals, working for or being affiliated with a university with a high research reputation was beneficial. In the words of one respondent:

"The standard academic researcher wants to be allied and published under the banner of a university that is recognized, worldwide. So, you have money behind you. You have networks behind you. If you want to go to a conference, it's so much easier. Here, even the taxi fare is an issue. For people who have an ambition to be recognized researchers, reputation plays a key role."

The later part of this quotation indicates the intrinsic link between reputation for research and another trait discovered through this interview process, performance/support/opportunity in research.

Respondents indicated that brand awareness of the research intensive universities was significant. In the words of one respondent:

> *"Organisational reputation plays a significant role in attractiveness. The brand image of the university, the reputation it has in the academic world, in society, that's important. It makes me uncomfortable if I have to explain to people where I work opposed to working somewhere they immediately recognize.*

This finding was important particularly due to the emphasis placed on employer brand awareness discussed in Chapter 5 of the thesis, which indicates that it is unlikely for a brand to enter consideration or choice sets if the candidate is unaware of any of its value proposition traits.

However, some respondents did indicate that at the Universities with a stronger research reputation, the pressure to perform may be significant:

> *"Regarding reputation, I'm realistic and pragmatic, and it doesn't matter too much to me. I've heard people who have worked at Group of 8 universities complaining that they're hammered from pillar to post and driven like slaves to try and achieve things."*

This finding aligned with concerns about workload and stress flagged in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

The association between reputation of the organisation and the individual was highlighted by some respondents. They indicated that:

> *"I guess we care so much about reputation because it's reflected onto ourselves. Whatever the reputation of the organisation is that we work for, that soon becomes part of our circle, I guess; part of our reputation. You read the rankings. But that's someone else's opinion. That's not my opinion. It's true that rankings are based on data about research output and those sorts of things but still, I like to form my own opinion either from working there or having some sort of dealing."*

"All humans are attracted, are influenced by social status and I'm using the term social status in the anthropological or even ecological sense, meaning our social standing within a particular given community is what gives us a sense of identity and fulfilment and so in that sense we as humans have that. We don't like to be ridiculed."

These findings align with the assertions pertaining affectivity and reputation in Chapter 5, where Cable and Turban (2001) indicate the importance of reputation.

Whilst recognising the overwhelming tendency to associate reputation with research performance, respondents emphasised the dichotomy of reputation, where the reputation of some institutions was associated with teaching:

"I don't think any of the top universities necessarily have the best reputation for teaching. But they're all up there with research."

"The regional universities have a strong reputation for caring about their students and have been very student focused. But that's not what gets them up there on the rating table so it depends on what criteria you're using."

"The reputation of the university for me is not that important. It's more about how well can you deliver that education to students. From a research perspective it becomes a little more important. Reputation has implications for credibility and ability to form strong networks and research partnerships."

Respondents indicates that it was in the interests of some institutions to do away with striving for research excellence, and stake their reputational claims on other criteria:

"If you can find an angle, and it's something like staff satisfaction or going above and beyond for your staff or making more opportunities for your staff development, for career prospects, for training, for conferences so that your staff are out there attending conferences and presenting the university at these conferences and conferences where they don't necessarily have to present

their papers but they can be there to network and get the name of the university out. Surely that's an angle for a regional university. It's not an even playing field here. So, I think they've got to find an angle and exploit it. That angle of being a good employer. And why can't the best angle be, being a good place to work? I think trying to compete in regards to prestige, research I think is maybe not going to be – I think it's an uphill battle. I think it's probably a losing battle."

"Generally speaking, between regional and metropolitan universities there is, very much, a difference in reputation. The regional universities have no other choice than to rely on some other means to attract staff, and I don't think that, by and large, they do."

"The regional universities can't compete on reputation. Southern Cross [University] say that they're focused on research because in their mind they think that's how you get the better people. […] There's a lot of missed opportunities for some universities who could become expert at experiential learning or environmental stuff, or take advantage of location."

"Regional universities are silly, absolutely idiotic, if they try to compete on the same grounds with bigger universities."

Another respondent also indicated that:

"Reputation, as a whole, is a challenge for the RUN Group: CQU, UNE, Southern Cross, Sunshine Coast, USQ, Federation University. They can definitely have pockets of research excellence. So, they may not be able to focus on a lot of things. That's probably the mistake that a lot of the smaller ones do. That they try to do all these different types of research whereas they would be better to put all their eggs in one basket."

One respondent indicated a perceived failure of their organisation's strategy:

"Australia's universities have different reputations to each other. The Regional University Networks are at the bottom. They're seen as polytechnics and they run themselves as polytechnics I think. This place is turning itself into a polytechnic with six identified research centres and everybody else can go to the devil. Operating as a polytechnic is not necessarily a bad thing, but it is if you want to be a university as distinct from a polytechnic."

These responses tie in with the literature regarding convergence and lack of differentiation within the higher education sector in Australia, discussed in Chapter 3 of this thesis.

There were connections made between the economic standing of the institution, and reputation. Respondents indicated that:

> "*Australia's universities have significantly different perceived reputations. At the top are the ones that have the money to advertise that reputational offering; the ones that actually are in a geographical and economic position to advertise that, and the two are linked. If a university that is operating on a market of five million people in a big city, by definition, you have access to a much larger market than if you've got 50,000 people around you, so you can convince five million people that you are in a better postilion. By definition, the urban nature of Australia will play a role in the universities that are perceived as more valid.*"

> "*It's all about the image, shaped by the money.*"

> "*The big universities are research intensive. They have money so that's the advantage. Their disadvantage is, I've heard from other PhD students and other academics, that you're just a number.*"

These finding align with the findings in literature extrapolated in Chapter 3, regarding the variance in (particularly research) funding at Australia's universities.

A key delineation through the qualitative interviews was the differing interpretation of reputation/status/rank of the university and that of the discipline/school/department. Respondents explained that:

> "*Different aspects of different universities have a reputation of excellence whereas the rest of the University is just also-rans. One of the things in the sector is that you can be famous for particular disciplines.*"

"It's quite important for a regional university to just focus on their niche. At least then they'd be certain of really leading disciplines in some areas, and put that as a selling point."

"I think so long as the university does its solid effort in line with its reputation looking after the professions; Accounting, Engineering, Teaching, more recently Nursing, that will stand. We're that sort of institution. We're not a medical focus. We don't do a lot of the more exotic disciplines. Arts has got a strong reputation for Acting, for Music, for Fine Arts. We do certain things well."

"It's very understandable that people are attracted if an institute has a particular discipline that is of interests to them, because ideally you want to work somewhere in an area where you can actually use what you've learned while doing your research."

"Reputation is important, but I like to emphasise or to specify reputation for excellence in my study area rather than the organisation as a whole."

In response to this delineation during the interview phase, two separate reputation based organisational traits were included in the questionnaire phase of this study. The respondents indicated that interpretation of a university as a whole was perceived differently to the reputation of a particular discipline, school or department. Reputation was both a primary trait identified by several respondents, and a key trait discussed in the ongoing semi-structured interviews. Respondents elaborated on perceived stratification of the higher education sector in Australia, with reputation apparently linked with research output, rankings and university groupings (Go8, compared with RUN, for example).

7.2 Performance/opportunity/support for Research and Teaching

An important finding of the qualitative research phase was the importance placed on the organisation's performance, opportunity and support for research, and separately, teaching. Respondents indicated that within the sector, there were universities with a research focus, and others with a teaching focus:

"You've got your factories where's there's a great push on teaching. Then you've got your places like say Melbourne where they have a strong research focus so that's where the real difference is."

"For example, University of Queensland, pump their resources into research so a lot more chance of succeeding in getting funding and external grants."

These responses go some way to justify the very different positions shared by Australian universities in global ranking schemes which largely measure research.

Many discussed the benefits of providing support for research and teaching activities:

"As for increasing or modifying the reputation for research and teaching, there are definitely carrots that could be dangled including research funds, opportunities to do more research, a pool of money that can be accessed for conference attendance, presentations also additional money that could be made available for additional training."

"*If the university wants to grow its extremely important that they have substantial research funds to promote the research of the academic staff. And that is how the university sells itself on the global front. So, it's very important that there should be substantial research funds, the university should also have funds to sponsor some journals in the different disciplines."*

These comments echo the voice of many respondents, who indicated that that organisational support of performance was paramount if stated goals were to be met.

In the same vein, respondents expressed concerns that workloads did not provide scope to undertake research effectively:

"If they work you so much that you can't do research, you actually take a backward step, because you're then one of these highly teaching-geared lecturers who creates a lot of money but you can't get your research done."

"Junior academics are generally worked to the bone teaching and it makes their capacity to then engage in the research that will actually get them to the point of being promoted, intensely difficult. You need time to think and to reflect, and to ruminate on stuff. Based on conversations with academics I think the life of many seems to be one that the whole institutional forces push against

their ability to do just that. This is quite unfortunate. It doesn't contribute then to knowledge. You are just a bunny marking papers, but you are not actually being able to contribute to new knowledge which I suppose is the attraction of being an academic."

"In terms of ability to do research, certainly, if you had a teaching workload that was very, very high but you're still expected to do research, basically doing it almost after hours, that's not particularly attractive."

"If you work full time in teaching then there's only so much time you can do your research in your own time, and that's really what helps your career move forward."

"If you've got the resources, well you can put in teaching only staff and research only staff or change up the traditional 40/40/20 in some way. Then you can start to see it happen because it can be supported. If you don't have the resources, then people are asked to do more with less and they're asked to do more of each basically."

Others indicated that the smaller and/or regional universities may be more resource scarce than their larger and/or metropolitan counterparts, and therefore unable to support quality research or teaching:

"In a smaller university that's resource scarce, it disadvantages both teaching only and research only positions. And then it puts a lot of pressure on the mixed position of teaching and research to have a certain outcome. So, it's a lot of pressure all the time. I think if there was more flexibility in the types of roles, people could choose what their strength was rather than feeling corralled."

"A large university has more resources and possibly that provides better collaboration opportunities and better access to research funding."

"The balance of research and teaching is sometimes different at regional universities, and that probably brings with it less resources. I've noticed at this regional university, compared to Griffith, the library is pretty ordinary; even electronic resources are pretty limited."

> *"There is a variation in support mechanisms within the sector, a bigger difference, with the richer universities perhaps G08 universities, having better conditions in terms of the funding."*

Again, these qualitative comments align with the argument in literature highlighted in Chapter 3, that suggests that lesser ranked universities may well be endeavouring to imitate more research intensive universities, but merely achieving inferior imitation.

The importance of teaching (even usurping research) was emphasised by some respondents. In the view of respondents:

> *"The industry is changing, and I think the universities might get caught with their pants down compared with some of these private education institutes that are becoming better and better. They are focusing on one thing, and that's teaching. They don't have the other stuff that convolutes possibly with that teaching element, and they can offer a better service."*

> *"A publish or perish attitude is quite prevalent in a lot of universities. And there can be such a heavy focus on research and publishing that the real reason why people are employed there, which is the teaching, is forgotten."*

> *"Most academics are drawn to research, money is more likely at hand, and promotional opportunities come through research. But I believe teaching is more important, actually. I would be attracted to work where reputation for teaching is good even if the reputation for research were poor."*

As with the delineation of reputation/status/rank of the university, respondents discussed the variance in performance/support/opportunity for teaching. Many respondents discussed the value they placed on teaching, but also suggested that it was not particularly highly valued by the organisation. They tended to emphasise that the university management, and indeed the sector itself, placed greater emphasis on research productivity and output. Some respondents expressed a strong desire to engage in more or better research, but that it required enhanced opportunity and support from the university management and leadership. There was some sense from some

respondents that the pursuit of research was disingenuous and that the primary focus of the regional university was indeed teaching.

7.3 Social responsibility/community engagement/public good.

The organisation's social responsibility, community engagement or public good was addressed by several respondents, and added to the list of traits for the questionnaire phase. Many of the employer branding studies discussed in chapter 5 also included this, or a similar trait, but it was not initially included in the first iteration of traits because it was expected that respondents would see all universities as performing a social responsibility, community engagement or public good, and thus not a possible source of differentiation. Confirming this suspicion, some remarks tend to indicate there is an inherent public good provided by a university, with some respondents noting that this meant there was unlikely to be major variation in this field. In the words of respondents:

> *"One of the pillars of the university is the community. The teaching and the service to the community and the research outcomes."*

> *"Universities are expected to do research and are expected to be engaged with the community that they're in. And to make the world a better place. I think it's almost taken. It's assumed."*

> *"Social responsibility and public good are implicit in academic roles because we want to think that as academics we are serving some greater good in what we do by providing education, providing a good, some meaningful contribution, to community."*

Social responsibility, community engagement, and public good were themes that emerged from analysis of the qualitative interviews. Respondents believed that universities performed an inherent public good, which benefited society and the community. However, many of the respondents particularly emphasised that their work with a regional university, contributing to a regional community, was a valuable and meaningful part of their work.

> *"Public good is an important factor. That's what we're here for. I would recommend someone to move so they could make an impact in a place where they know that they could be making a*

difference and that the university is willing to have that impact instead of just meeting the industry performance indicators."

"If I were looking at two universities as potential employers and one of them did have a good social responsibility program then I would be more attracted to it."

"It does depend on your interpretation of reputation. For example, if you consider Rockhampton or Armidale, University of New England, the service that they offer is invaluable to that community. My focus is on the students so I favour regional universities because of the student cohort. Making a difference is attractive to me and potentially others."

"I like to think of myself as being regionally placed and contributing to a regional community and I take great pride in that sort of association with community that we have here. That may well exist at G08 universities, but I don't have the aspiration to go and serve a leading university in that way. I like to work for the underdog in a way"

"I'd probably be more of a regional university person. I like universities that are more about students rather than numbers, and I think that's one of the good things about this university."

"[Regional university] Students are different from the UQ [University of Queensland] students, but it feels like you are doing something for the public good. And I love dealing with those students. I love this work."

Many respondents from regional universities expressed significant value in the public good, community engagement or social responsibility that they achieve as members of a regional community. This aligns with the stated mission of regional universities, according to the RUN group, as discussed in Chapter 3.

7.4 Organisational Culture

Given the findings of Chapter 2, which demonstrated that the organisational culture of academics staff may not be a positive, given the high levels of job dissatisfaction, it was not surprising that there was considerable attention given to organisational culture in the interview conversations.

"If you hear that a place is an unhappy place you're not happily going to jump into it, are you?"

"The collegial nature of the school that I'd be applying to would be the priority."

"I would hope for organisational culture to be collegial and supportive."

"You want to be made to feel welcome and secure in your job."

"A sense of community or being present for each other is important."

"I'd hope for culture where there are people happy to foster you, happy to help you grow, happy to train you, monitor you but leave you alone to your own devices. That there was somebody who would help you. Somebody who you could talk to, with how-to issues, as a mentor."

"I know that organisational culture is pretty appalling in a lot of institutions. And I think academics know that. I think academia is a really unique work environment and that you are constantly pitted against your colleagues especially in terms of research."

Key cultural traits identified by respondents were trust, open communication, autonomy and collegiality.

Following the interviews, this organisational culture trait was expounded, with the revised organisational traits separated as:

- Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors.
- Culture that is structured and formal where leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks
- Culture that is competitive where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition
- Culture that is dynamic where leaders foster creativity and stimulate innovation

These were based on the culture alternatives posed in section 5.5.2 with some modifications to avoid gendered language, to align with the themes emerging from the interviews, and to simplify for respondents.

It was interesting to note that while respondents felt that it was difficult to ascertain the true nature of an organisational culture without direct exposure, they readily indicated that they would seek insights from colleagues and networks before seeking or accepting employment at another institution. Respondents included:

> *"You'd have to do a lot of canvassing but if it were possible it would be worthwhile trying to find out what the culture is like if you were offered a new job. You have political or cultural islands within institutions."*

> *"When people make the decision to move from one university to another it's usually through who they know in that environment."*

> *"It's talked about, you go to conferences, you meet academics from other universities so it's something that's often discussed with your peers. And just hearing the conversations that they have with their own colleagues or with others in other universities, you do get to see the difference in the cultures in the various universities."*

> *"If you're going to have information prior to joining about an organisational culture I would imagine that it would be more negative information that's out there rather than positive information. I think it will because someone knows somebody who's had a really bad time at a particular university and they've told their friends whose told their academic friends and that's a very negative image or a very negative experience that can get out there. I don't know very many people who say, "Geez I love where I work. I'm going to tell someone about it."*

> *"Of course, before accepting the position you would go about trying to find out by asking around. I think that would be crazy not to. What one person's experiences is really not necessarily going to be what everybody experiences."*

"If I were taking a job at another institution, I'd want to know about the culture and I would try to find out. I'd talk to people who work there and try to do some reconnaissance for sure. If it's a genuinely good place to work and it's known for that, then that will get people there."

"Based on that word of mouth, based on recommendations from your friends or colleagues, if you're told it's a very negative place to work, I think that really comes into play."

This consideration is particularly pertinent to employer branding, because an individual's construction of an employer brand is built from a range of sources, and even contributes to the formation of psychological contract in the pre-employment phase (see Chapter 5).

The role of leadership in culture was emphasised. Respondents indicated that:

"Leadership infiltrates everything. The way processes are enacted, what's incentivised in terms of behaviour, what's given value. It's absolutely critical."

"Leadership creates or destroys opportunities."

"Leaders need to realise that their people will give them success and they don't try to control too hard. It's with the sort of parameters you put in place to let your employees be the best they can be. Success will follow if leadership does that. They get so caught up with their KPIs and because of that, they don't understand that by letting more junior academics or mid-level management or more junior subordinates actually do what they do well, it's going to lead to good outcomes for them as well. Instead, they get so caught up in their individual KPIs that they force lower level staff, from leadership down to work within those parameters all the time. They control, they squeeze too much."

"If I were joining an organisation, I would hope that the leader demonstrated traits of creativity, being acceptable to failures, being innovative and being kind"

"I would value a leader who was interested in engaging and empowering the academic staff, and the general staff too."

Conversations about organisational culture with respondents emphasised the importance of this trait. Respondents expressed are keenness to work within a culture where leaders and managers were supportive, supported professional growth and encouraged collegiality. Respondents indicated that this trait would be a key consideration for them if they were to pursue employment with a new university, and they would endeavour to discover information about the culture before pursing or accepting employment. It was interesting to note the powerful expression of word of mouth and networks in the dissemination of interpretations of leadership and organisational culture. Respondents indicated a willingness to both pursue and share information about their employer's (or prospective employer's) workplace culture. The corollary of low academic job satisfaction (as discussion in Chapter 2) is that word of mouth may detract a potential employee from pursuing or accepting a role at a particular university, just a negative review of a hotel on TripAdvisor.com may detract future guests from staying there.

7.5 Job Design

As with its prevalence in the literature regarding job satisfaction, job design factors are prevalent in the employer branding literature and in the traits utilised by researchers in other employer branding studies, respondents during the qualitative phase of this thesis similarly emphasised the design of their work as a driver of attractiveness.

A focus on research was discussed by many respondents, with the indication being that the provision of research time was desirable.

> *"Job design plays a significant role in the attractiveness of the university as an employer. If you are swamped with teaching and have no time to do research that's not an academic job."*

> *"If you were applying for a role and you were told you had a thirty per cent research allocation in this role, that would be really attractive, but if you were told that it's twenty per cent research allocation that would be less attractive."*

> *"If the job was advertised as an 80* per cent *teaching role I probably wouldn't be that attracted to work in that position. I'd want something that had a better balance between the teaching and research."*

These results were unsurprising, given the value placed on research in other questions during the interview. Respondents indicated that there was limited provision of research time:

> *"There are institutions that have reputations for the teaching load from hell, where people are actually trapped in those jobs because they can't actually get enough research done while they're there to make them attractive to another employer"*

> *"I would say all universities want you to focus on research but all universities will give you more teaching than you can do if you're going to focus on your research."*

These themes align with the concerns over job satisfaction highlighted in Chapter 2 of this thesis.

It is worth noting that some respondents indicated that they enjoyed the teaching part of their role, with it ranging from something they would miss if it were gone, to what they would prefer to focus on:

> *"You'd love to have a job that was all research. I do like teaching. I probably would miss it. But then, you could just teach a few, a little bit here and there."*

> *"I would rather play to my strengths and perhaps pursue a position with a bit more weight on the teaching side as long as I'm not held at the same level as people who are weighted more on the research side."*

> *"My preference would probably be teaching over a research focused role."*

These findings suggest that it may be valuable to explore the composition of the academic role, as mentioned in Section 4.3 of this thesis.

Respondents indicated concern over the potential career limitations of teaching focussed positions.

> *"I think that's something most employees in academia don't trust. They still trust the old way of moving up the ladder, which is publishing in your discipline and that is usually the end all and be all. If you can tick the boxes with teaching and engagement, fantastic. Have you pumped out publications in that area? Yes, fine you're promoted. No, you're staying where you're staying."*

> *"In offering a teaching only position you're asking an academic to give up an avenue which is important for them, which potentially is limiting their opportunities of getting employment at a higher level at another university."*

Again, this reflects concerns flagged in Chapter 2 of this thesis, where there is a danger that teaching focussed roles result in the further stratification of the academic workforce, and the stagnation of careers for those who choose this pathway.

Autonomy was an important job design consideration for respondents, who indicated that:

> *"I've always held the professional stance that if you are doing you're output and you're doing your research, you have your engagement activities, and you're teaching well, in theory your right is to a certain level of autonomy. If you came across a place that said 'No, we want to see you here for this duration.' or if middle management leaders are controlling you, I would consider this as a massive negative."*

> *"Academia gives me the pathway for expressing myself, being creative, doing things that I'm interested in. If the systems in place and the powers that be within the university allow me to express myself as opposed to hindering whatever creative juices I have, I would rather go and work for a place where that was encouraged."*

> *"Trust and empowerment or autonomy are important. With academics I think there has to be a bit of autonomy for university lecturers or academics. That's the basic sense of who they are, the idea of the university."*

"It comes down to job satisfaction. If you've been given flexibility in what you research and when and how you design courses, it's going to make your work a lot more interesting."

While respondents indicated the importance of autonomy, they also indicated a willingness to align with the organisation's objectives:

"I'm happy to play the corporate game too. Don't get me wrong. if there's a particular research project or area that we're pursuing, I've got no problem playing along with that, but please don't stifle me."

"Research and structure are obviously things that are important to the university, and obviously, as researchers, we can't expect to go off on our own tangent completely."

Related to autonomy, respondents discussed the burden of administrative work, which comments such as:

"Job design does play a role in attractiveness. Administration staff for example; if you have the right administration support then you feel supported in your job that's a great thing."

The reduction in professional or administrative support staff services at some universities was highlighted by respondents as placing additional burden on academic staff. Respondents indicated that:

"It would be good if the university would say, "We're not going to create ten layers of bullshit over the top and take your time and stop you from actually doing what you want to achieve." If they're going to strip all the admin support away, they need to do that and they're sort of doing two things. Instead, they've stripped the administrative support away and added on the administrative work."

"You have statements like, "When we have a tough budget time we really want to support our academics, so I'm afraid the professional staffs are the ones that need redundancies." What's not said

there is, "Which means, you now get to do their job." Which is kind of the opposite of saying they want to support academics. The rhetoric and the reality are often so divorced."

The significant variance in administrative workload between institutions was highlighted:

"It seems that some universities have less administrative load for staff. If there could be more people to do the administrative work, that would be good. In some places, you don't have that."

"In my other two universities I'd had administrative staff who would do a lot of those mundane tasks and I just assumed when I came to this university that it would be like that, but it isn't".

These thematic findings align with concerns for autonomy and the burden of administrative work flagged in the area of job satisfaction in the academic workforce, presented in Chapter 2 of this thesis. A related field, work/life balance, was also indicated as a key job design factor by respondents.

"It is important to have a balance between your personal and professional life in academia. And a supportive environment definitely affirms a workplace as attractive."

"I like the flexibility at my university. I can work from home or from here. I can attend to my work on the weekends if I feel so inclined and I have the freedom of working independently."

"Work is just one aspect of your life. You've got to try to keep a balance. So, you want to have a lovely life, a beautiful lifestyle."

"I love the flexibility of this job, that diversity, and the roles that I play. But flexibility to attend my kids' athletics carnival, or whatever it might be, and to work from home a day a week. Those things are really important."

While identified as important, some respondents indicated that it was difficult to attain:

"You're entitled to have your four weeks or five weeks annual leave and Christmas, New Year break, but expected to research. That's the difficult part in getting the organisation to be fair about teaching and research because you need to be able to research during the term if you're going to have a teaching/research role. If you knew that an organisation treated staff fairly, that would be attractive."

"Academics bring their work home with them. They work long hours."

"At the moment, I work too much, don't live at all."

Conversations regarding job design with respondents revealed that this dimension was in fact made up of several key traits. Similar to the conversation regarding performance/support/opportunity in research and teaching, respondents many participants indicate that they would enjoy more research time in their role, but the reality involved a significant teaching workload. In discussing autonomy, respondents both emphasised its importance, while many also expressed their willingness to conform to the directions of the school or university. Work/life balance was discussed at length with respondents, with many expressing that it was difficult to attain with the significant teaching workloads and the desire to pursue research goals in any additional time that was available. Many respondents complained of tedious administrative workloads, which for those with exposure to the sector over a period seemed to be growing.

In the questionnaire phase of this study, reflecting the emergent themes from this qualitative interview phase, job design has been extrapolated to include:

- Job includes or allows for a focus on research
- Job includes or allows for a focus on teaching
- Job includes or allows for autonomy
- Job includes or allows for minimal administrative workload
- Job includes or allows for work/life balance

7.6 Career, Development and Growth

As chapter 4 suggests, academics place considerable value in their career growth, development and trajectory. Different elements of career growth were discussed with respondents, who indicated varying attitudes to different components or means of career, development and growth. For instance, the opportunity to participate in overseas projects or exchanges were identified as desirable by some respondents, but it was recognised that not all would be attracted to this provision:

> *"We all understand that the academic world is a global one and the ability to travel, to be able to go and be a visiting academic at another place whilst maintaining your position at the university, is very attractive. I think, being able to go and learn from other colleagues, whether they're down the road or overseas, is very positive."*

> *"The opportunities that the institution avails the staff with, to maybe be involved with international teaching and international research opportunities, even opportunities for domestic collaborations or travel. All those things can be quite attractive to an external person for an academic role."*

> *"As a younger academic with no responsibilities, the opportunity to work overseas on projects or exchange would certainly be attractive."*

> *"For me, the opportunity to work overseas is particularly attractive."*

It is recognised here that individual circumstance very much drives a willingness, preparedness, or preference to participate in projects that require travel.

Respondents strongly emphasised the importance of expert colleagues to learn from and work with:

> *"You're not going to get grants unless you're partnering with a more senior academic. And that research mentoring doesn't seem to occur to the extent it probably should."*

"I would say that that ability to form connections with more senior researchers so you can jointly publish and do things like that is probably more actively encouraged in other places. So, it might have a real appeal for people as early career researchers if they were choosing between this university and somewhere else."

"Having a really strong mentor who can help you write that grant application, provide advice on where you should be publishing. Someone who's successful and is able to share their knowledge I think is something which is invaluable and is something which can be overlooked by universities."

"Obviously it's who your colleagues are in the school that influences attraction. I mean there may be a person you really want to work with, and that could be the major reason you chose to go and work somewhere because you really want to collaborate with that person."

"A really important part for me is the opportunity for collaboration with academic specialists in my field. That's probably number one for me. If I had an opportunity of working with a genius it wouldn't matter what the university was like."

These remarks seem to suggest that the opportunity to work with experts is of importance, particularly because it contributes to growth and development, but also for its capacity to provide support for research, and perhaps improve the reputation, status or rank of the discipline, school, department or university.

Opportunities to lead projects and tasks was another job design trait discussed with respondents. Respondents indicated that at smaller, regional universities, there was greater opportunities to be noticed. Two respondents used the phrase:

"You can be a bigger fish in a smaller pond rather than a small fish in an extremely big pond."

Another explained that:

"You don't have that incredible hierarchy that you would see in a larger faculty where the junior staff members just teach out of prepared materials."

However, it was surprising that this opportunity to be involved with leadership was not more valued at the regional universities, given that this would contribute to professional growth and potentially career trajectory. However, it is noted that by and large, promotion within academia is based on research output and productivity (see Chapter 2).

Salary was discussed with respondents, but not seen as a key driver:

> *"If there's $5,000 difference between one university and the other but I'm getting all these things that I value, I would sacrifice $5,000. Even $10,000, I'd sacrifice for the other benefits. If there is really that opportunity to learn and work in a team."*

> *"Sure, pay is relevant but not really the be all and end all, for me, anyway."*

> *"I have heard that one university in Melbourne pays the highest wages but people are unhappy there. Whereas at another Melbourne university I've heard people talk about what a wonderful, collegial environment it is. So that's why I would go for that university."*

While some respondents indicated that the salary across the sector was relatively similar, others did point out differences:

> *"If people were just after the money they would probably choose to go somewhere else. I think there's about a twelve to fifteen grand difference between here and say Australian National University or somewhere like that but I'm not in it for the money. Cost of living down there eats that up quickly anyway."*

> *"Pay is actually not that consistent. Melbourne University pays significantly higher than Federation University."*

> *"Certainly, we're near the bottom of the pay scales for academics but that's no big fat deal when you consider that you have free car parking, cost of living, cost of buying houses, that you're fifteen minutes to work and you're not stuck in traffic jams too much. There's all those factors."*

Some respondents indicated that a higher salary in itself would not encourage them to move to a metropolitan university:

> *"You'd have to pay me. In that case you would have to pay me a bit more because I would be sacrificing my lifestyle. If I put my lifestyle above cost, something would have to come up to balance that. You'd have to pay me well to do something like that."*

Respondents also indicated that they had pursued an academic career for the salary:

> *"I didn't come to the university sector just for the sake of earning more dollars. in IT industry when I was working as a software engineer, I was earning way more than a Level B lecturer here."*

> *"If I wanted to go for money Instead of quality of life or doing something that I like, then I would go to Brisbane and work in a big company."*
> *"It's probably acknowledged that the pay is not brilliant if you're an academic."*

> *"Coming from the legal area, if you're really interested in salary you're not going to leave private practice. My salary fell by two thirds when I left."*

Some concerns over salary were expected, particularly given the concerns about academic salaries in Chapter 2.

Respondents emphasised the importance of opportunity being provided for career growth, promotion and professional development. For respondents:

> *"Career growth and development plays an extremely important role in attractiveness of the university as an employer. If not the most important, one of the most important aspects."*

> *"I hope for leaders being supportive of staff development, maybe even formal mentoring programmes, whether there's research monies that are available, whether they're very despotic or whether there's a lot more committee and school involvement in decision making and direction."*

"If you've got opportunities for academic enrichment and mentoring and collaboration it doesn't matter where you are."

"People want to do better. They want to think better. They want to become better professionals. I mean, that is part of the thing of being an academic."

This concern for ongoing development and growth aligns with the literature relating to academic career development presented in Chapter 2. However, it is worth noting that internal promotion policies and procedures received criticism. In the view of respondents:

"A lot of academics use a change to a different university so they can get to the next level."

"It's evident the easiest way to get promotion in the Australian context is to move universities. To be promoted internally is a far more onerous task."

"In order to move up the chain you need to move and go elsewhere. That's remarkable. I can only think it's an academic thing, because I can't see other organisations, other places, where you'd actually encourage somebody to leave a university and then welcome them back in the future once they've done their steps that they have to take. I don't know what the benefit in it is, I can't see it as an employee. I can see the benefit of somebody going on a sabbatical or teaching at another university for six months, but actually going from employment at one place, to going for employment at another place, and doing the same role is baffling. If that was industry, and you gave your notice that you were going to work for a competitor, you'd get your marching orders."

"It would be more appealing If universities had a pathway where if you meet certain criteria you get promoted. People become demotivated because their careers stagnate."

"Institutions take themselves far too seriously in terms of promotion processes and it's often easier to get that promotion by applying for the position when it's vacant than going through a promotion process."

The term 'Job security' was used in the interviews, but was reframed as 'Secure / permanent / tenured employment' for the questionnaire. In this trait, respondents indicated that:

> *"Job security plays a significant role in attractiveness. We know that we're going towards a casualised workforce. I've been working casually for a number of years here now and every term that is a concern. That's a stress you have to overcome and that is a negative thing that impacts on organisational culture."*

> *"Job security is hugely significant in attractiveness of the university as an employer, for the simple reason that – well I have a mortgage. I don't want to have to worry about it. It is for economic reasons."*

> *"If a university was to offer that security, they would attract the best talent in the market, especially for newer, early career researchers."*

> *"You wouldn't go somewhere that was not tenured if you had a choice between two jobs, one was tenured, one's not. It's a pretty simple choice. A permanent role is precious. I think I would choose the tenured job even at a less attractive institution."*

> *"If more permanent roles were offered, rather than putting people on contracts, it would certainly be a major factor in attractiveness of employment."*

> *"The idea of being tenured is better because it's a volatile sector and it's very vulnerable to political interference. If I was employed on a contract I'd be worried about that."*

> *"You do a better job when not having to worry about security of your position and the security of your colleagues' positions."*

Job security, flagged as concern for job satisfaction and the attractiveness of the academic vocation in Chapter 2 of this thesis, was also flagged as a concern in the qualitative interviews, particularly because it allows for focus on the job, pursuit of personal endeavours such as buying a house, and security in what was seen as a volatile sector.

Some respondents indicated a differing level of importance for secure / permanent / tenured employment in a regional location, compared with a metropolitan location:

> *"In a location with multi universities, even if you are on contract, on contractual roles, you still can make your ends meet and you still can make a good living. That would mean that at a regional university the more secure employment of a permanent role would be more attractive because if you wanted to keep working in the university sector, in the cities there are many more options of places to find a position."*

> *"The issues would be massively different if you were considering a move to a region where there is only one university compared with a move to a city where there are several universities. There's often not even adequate non-academic roles to be found in some regions. "*

These findings suggest that job security is of key importance regional employment, because there is no alternative to merely seek employment at an alternative, nearby institution.

Analysis of the responses to regarding career, development and growth emphasised that many academics maintain a love of learning, a growth mindset and the desire to build their professional profiles. Many emphasised the value of working with expert colleagues, while some believed that this was not at all inhibited by geographic isolation given the influx and growing maturing of telecommunications in the modern world. Some respondents indicated a real willingness and desire to work overseas on exchanges or projects, while some, as expected, indicated that family or social commitments would preclude their interest in such initiatives. Research by Bauder (2015) ratifies this finding, suggesting that international mobility was more often associated with younger academic staff and those who had recently completed their PhD studies. Conversations regarding salary revealed that some academics assumed a relative standardisation of salaries across universities in the sector, while others attributed any variance to cost of living being greater in metropolitan regions. Generally, salary was not seen as a major driver of attractiveness, particularly given the realisation that more money could be earnt outside of academia. Job security was a common theme for discussion, with respondents indicating that this had a strong

impact on personal endeavours such as buying a house. The organisational traits linked with this category, including in the questionnaire phase, are:

- Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects
- Expert colleagues to learn from/work with
- Opportunities to lead projects and tasks
- High Salary
- Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development
- Secure / permanent / tenured employment

7.7 Workplace Features

The role of workplace features in employer attractiveness are discussed in section 5.5.7. While promoted on the employment websites of many universities, there is limited literature to substantiate the value of workplace features in attractiveness. Workplace features were discussed with respondents, with some indicating that they are not particularly important:

> *"Friends and colleagues, I have heard, when looking for a job, don't mention anything about swimming pool, gyms, childcare. These things are not as important to them as support."*

> *"I wouldn't make a decision based on the workplace features. It wouldn't make or break the decision."*

> *"If you don't have those things in university, you have them in town."*

Meanwhile, others indicated workplace features did have some impact:

> *"I would be very attracted to a place that had those facilities, had the campus life. Nice offices, different spaces for teaching, all that sort of thing make a difference. Facilities, technology resources, that's very attractive. Whether it's significant in attractiveness, I'm not sure. It's the cream on top."*

> *"Workplace features are icing. I think they're very comfortable icing that if you had none of those things then you'd probably say, "Oh I can't even get a good cup of coffee!" But they're not the core deciders."*

However, some respondents did indicate the workplace features were important:

> *"It can be dreadful here. It's dead. You've got nobody around, because they're all online, so it can be depressing. So, in that particular context it becomes not a bonus, but part of the package."*

> *"Workplace features do play a role. It's nice to have those facilities, but it is also the expression of worth from executive. Universities that take that step, even at a moderate cost, to provide staff members with access to a gym or swimming pool is a significant step towards making a better, happier culture. In that way facilities make a little difference, but also is an expression from executive."*

The overwhelming position of respondents to this question was that while nice to have, workplace features such as gymnasiums, child care and modern offices were not of great significance, except where they could be conceived as expressions of worth because they were investments in staff made by the university. Many respondents indicated that in the absence of such provisions, they would merely alternative to utilising similar facilities within the wider community. However, there is a possibility that these workplace facilities exist as hygiene factors, where their absence or low quality may not be well received by employees.

Workplace Features (e.g. gym, childcare, food, modern offices) was reframed as 'Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design and modern technology are provided' in the questionnaire.

7.8 Location

Location was an important organisational trait identified by respondents:

> *"For me, location plays a most definite role in attractiveness of a university. Location is important to my lifestyle. I put my lifestyle before anything else in my life."*

> *"Location plays a role in the attractiveness of a university, big time. Because you've got to live there. But it's more than just that. On a professional level it plays a role."*

"A big thing is location. It needs to be a place where I'm happy to live, and move to, with my family. Location plays a role in the attractiveness of the university. It is the primary thing. Life is not just work. Particularly when you've got a family, you've got to think beyond just yourself and your career. You have to be in a place that you're happy, that you're safe, that you can connect, that you have amenities that you enjoy, that you have access to nature."

Many respondents indicated that location preference was inherently and intrinsically tried to family and friends:

"Location does play a role in attractiveness. My kids are in school here. We have a mortgage. It's not just a decision that has to be made by me. We have a mortgage and we have two kids."

"The location is important to me. Family's here, grew up here."

Many respondents also discussed climate:

"Climate is a factor. We're such a huge country we do have a variation in climate."

"The attraction could be the tropical climate and things that Far North Queensland has to offer or the cooler climate of the South."

"It sounds silly, dictating your career by the climate but I really like warm weather. My husband hates warm weather so Coffs Harbour's pretty temperate for us."

Respondents indicated that some universities were in 'undesirable' locations, with one explaining that:

"It's just the distance, isolation and climate. We have that problem here, attracting good candidates."

For these respondents, these universities needed to pursue alternative strategies to attract staff:

"The universities in undesirable locations have to pursue improvement in other areas to become attractive to potential employees."

"For universities in locations that are not desirable to make themselves attractive you would have to use pay or compensation of some kind."

"I want to be able to remain connected to family and friends. If the university can offer flexibility, I'm willing to sacrifice that proximity."

"For me to consider a move to Armidale or Rockhampton or somewhere like that, it would have to be a really good job and really good conditions. Pay does come into it when it comes to this point, important only in that situation, that I wouldn't be disadvantaged by being up there. Let's say I was offered a job in Rockhampton that gave me enough money that I could fly back to Sydney quite regularly, and do that comfortably, it might be quite a different thing."

Not all expressed concern over location. Those that did not, indicated that:

"Location doesn't make any difference. Nowadays it has become such a digital world, it doesn't matter where you live, but what you do. For research, and other things, you have so much of communication which were not there twenty, thirty years ago. So now I can communicate with anyone, sitting in any remote university."

"If you have opportunity for collaboration they could be on Mars or the moon. Just because you're stuck in a particular university doesn't mean you can't collaborate across others, which again is where academic work is really different."

For some, they saw benefits living in a metropolitan centre:

"I'm craving for an urban environment in my life at the moment because you've got less intellectual stimulation here. You just tend to be less open to new things. In the urban environment there are seminars, there are forums, there are exhibitions, there are conferences. Regional Australia does face key distinctive challenges for sure. You don't necessarily have the budget to attend a conference."

"If we were to move, it would be ideal to be closer to a major airport or an international airport."

"Location is a really important part of lifestyle. Remoteness is bad for me."

"Personally, I think I'd rather be closer to a major metropolitan centre and so that I've got access to really good culture outside in the social world."

"It's just the whole buzz of the metropolitan campuses that's so attractive. The atmosphere is not boring. There's always something happening."

"I prefer cities which are big metropolitan cities, the diversity, the multiculturalism. You see, a city is full of hustle and bustle, a lot of crowds, sound, noise, et cetera. I don't like the sleeping city. I love the cities which do not sleep at night, the cars and the busses and the trains and the people and the crowd. Isolation has no pleasure. I love to be in the middle of the people, in the middle of the crowd."

"I like Melbourne. I think that they are the universities, in Melbourne, that are definitely blessed with that kind of dual professional and personal balance. It has a nice mix of semi-affordability, cultural options but also outdoor space. You can escape to the Mornington Peninsular in less than two hours, but you can also go downtown. It has a nice balance. It's got a nice cultural feel."

"There's a lot more flexibility to move between universities and stuff like that. If things turned awry at University of Queensland you could walk across the road to Queensland University of Technology. Living in the city makes it a little more vibrant. You have a lot more interaction with other people in your discipline that aren't at your university. It's easier to get to conferences and that sort of stuff."

"I think maybe Perth would be a bit far away. Having said that, Perth might be useful to get into Asia. Same time zone, and family and friends back in Asia. Darwin is the same thing."

"The Brisbane universities are not too bad. For example, QUT is positioned in the city. Public transport provides opportunity then, to live within reasonable proximity. I think that those areas are quite good."

Others held a different view of metropolitan centres:

"In Sydney, there are heaps of opportunities for collaboration, heaps of opportunities for attending conferences, attending other sort of research institutes, etc. But, you would have to attempt Sydney's real estate market which would destroy me. And you'd have to be in Sydney traffic and endure everything that Sydney has associated with it."

"If I had to drive every day one hour up and one hour down… A lot of commuting time is a waste of time."

"I wouldn't want to live in Sydney. It's too crowded and crazy, anonymous. The idea of living in Sydney where a tin shed is a million bucks. No thanks."

"With city living there is pollution and travel problems."

"I can't think of living in a big city again, because I feel really stressed when I look at heavy traffic and appreciate that here there is no traffic and long queues to wait in line."

Respondents provided the following insights about living and working in a regional location:

"It's very isolated, which professionally means that it's much more expensive and much more, just inconvenient, to attend conferences, to seek out collaborators and those other associated things, to bring people in for those conferences and events with peers. That is a limiting factor. Less so than it would have been historically, because of the internet, but it's still a limiting factor. On the other hand, in a non-professional level it's in a beautiful place where you want to bring up a young family. I live in the Byron hinterland. It's beautiful. I moved here for that reason. So, given the other employment opportunities within such a beautiful remote location. Well that's pretty good."

"Some of the regional universities are in places that don't give a lot else, unless you really are after the quiet country life."

"The town is reliant on the university. It's a big industry for Armidale. So, that's part of its vulnerability too. And the fortunes of the university are waxing and waning. Well, the town is exactly in the same mode."

"I liked that small-town feeling of Armidale. Everything was in a close range and I have a family and have kids who go to school. The schools were fantastic and close-range."

"Overseas travel from isolated areas involves challenging and time-consuming arrangements to and from your destination. Isolation becomes an issue. Attending conferences and visiting international destinations is impacted by the five or six hours drive or the expensive flights to and from Sydney or Brisbane."

"There's no stress here in Armidale, especially with a very small family. It's a really good place to raise up your kid. Schools are really good."

"I love to live by the beach so I enjoy the location of Southern Cross University. Even though it might be ranked last, if it was ranked last of all the universities, that wouldn't bother me."

"I like my house and my life and the climate. It's fifteen minutes' drive to work. I don't have to pay for parking. These things have a big impact. So, it's lifestyle and my friends. It's where your social network is."

"Schooling, quality of schooling, proximity to the beach, climate and just life's simplicity, makes the Sunshine Coast a desirable location."

"The location I desire is here (Mackay). I have strong ties to this place. Lifestyle for me is here. Family and lifestyle probably are the two major things. In the cities, there are no particular services or facilities that I need that aren't here in Mackay."

"Although I did stress to my husband that maybe when we're much older we could move to the University of the Sunshine Coast. That might be quite nice. Although I can't really see that environment conducive to doing much work."

"You've got to be at a university that fits in with your life. I love the Sunshine Coast, so this university is here, and I like the location of it and I love the other academics that I work with. But it's primarily the location. One of the things that I like about the Sunshine Coast is its proximity to Brisbane. It's far enough away that it's regional but it's still close enough that it's got all the facilities whereas some of the more northern places are quite remote. I don't know that I want to be that remote."

"A big factor in the appeal of Rockhampton is that it's very convenient for most aspects of life. Everything is within a very short distance if you drive. And it's not as crowded as most major cities. The weather is very suitable."

Engaging in conversation regarding location, in the actual location of the respondents, provided valuable insights for the researcher, as familiarity with locational insights was possible. Respondents readily referred to lifestyle aspects, traffic, travel time, scenery, beach, and weather as determinants in their preference of location. Aside from these factors, respondents did indicate that regional centres only host one university, meaning that mobility between academic postings is limited. Above all, the focus of this question among respondents was the importance of proximity to family, and family needs such as children's education and partner's work. In the questionnaire, the term 'Location' was expanded to:

- Employer's Inner Metropolitan Australia location
- Employer's Outer Metropolitan Australia location
- Employer's Inland regional Australia location
- Employer's Coastal regional Australia location

7.9 Summary

Prior to conducting the interviews that formed part of this research, a set of organisational traits was developed based on review of the literature pertaining to the academic vocation, regional universities in the Australian context, human capital in academia and employer branding literature. The integration of key concern regarding job satisfaction and the attractiveness of the academic vocation generally were synthesised in line with those employer traits used in other studies of employer branding traits. The qualitative interview phase of this research provided insights regarding the organisational traits that academics in regional areas evaluate in

determining employer of choices, value adding to sequential explorative mixed methods approach deployed in this study. The qualitative phase of this study saw the revision of organisational traits deemed to be evaluated in determining employer of choice from seven traits (albeit with some nested traits) to a more comprehensive list of 25 traits.

The initial traits to be investigated were:

- Reputation (for research and teaching)
- Organisational Culture
- Job Design (research/teaching focus, autonomy, administrative workload)
- Job Security
- Career, Development and Growth
    - Opportunities to work overseas on projects or exchange
    - Opportunities to lead projects and tasks
    - Opportunities to learn from colleagues
    - Opportunities for fast promotion
- Location
- Workplace Features (e.g. gym, childcare, food, modern offices)

Reputation/status/rank of the university was extrapolated and separated to include a separate trait of Reputation/status/rank of my discipline school/department, reflecting the respondents' ties to their discipline as near in importance to their association with a particular university. Performance/support/opportunity in research and performance/support/opportunity in teaching traits were added to the mix of traits, reflecting the value that respondents placed on these distinct features. Social responsibility. The regional university respondents' emphasis on the inherent social good they contribute to as part of a regional university saw the trait social responsibility/community engagement/public good added to this list of traits to be included in the questionnaire. The discussions about organisational culture with respondents led to inclusion of separate and distinct organisational cultures, linked with leadership behaviours. While respondents at the regional universities expressed value in traits associated with a culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors, the alternative cultural descriptors (culture that is structured and formal where leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks; culture that is competitive where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance

and competition; and culture that is dynamic where leaders foster creativity and stimulate innovation) were included to examine any variance with those affiliated with other universities. The job design trait was expanded to include separate traits for focus on teaching, focus on research, autonomy, and minimal administrative workload, to honour the importance placed on these factors by respondents. Respondents saw focus on teaching and research in very different lights, and while attaching value to all, tended to wish more for a focus on research (perhaps because they did not have it). Respondents did not indicate an absence of autonomy, but maintained that it was important, and suggested some erosion to professionalism given the increased managerialism and increased administrative workload they faced. The sub-traits of career development and growth were separated to be traits in their own right, reflecting the alternative importance and feedback garnered in conversation regarding these factors. Location was extrapolated to include regional coastal location, regional inland location, inner metropolitan location and outer metropolitan location to provide clearly different alternatives for respondents. Workplace features was maintained in the study.

Following the interview phase, in response to respondent input, the list of organisational traits was modified to:

- Reputation/status/rank of the university.
- Reputation/status/rank of my discipline/school/department.
- Performance/support/opportunity in research.
- Performance/support/opportunity in teaching.
- Social responsibility/community engagement/public good.
- Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors.
- Culture that is structured and formal where leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks
- Culture that is competitive where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition
- Culture that is dynamic where leaders foster creativity and stimulate innovation
- Job includes or allows for a focus on research
- Job includes or allows for a focus on teaching
- Job includes or allows for autonomy

- Job includes or allows for minimal administrative workload
- Job includes or allows for work/life balance
- Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects
- Expert colleagues to learn from/work with
- Opportunities to lead projects and tasks
- High Salary
- Secure / permanent / tenured employment
- Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development
- Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design and modern technology are provided.
- Employer's Inner Metropolitan Australia location
- Employer's Outer Metropolitan Australia location
- Employer's Inland regional Australia location
- Employer's Coastal regional Australia location

8.0 The Desired Employer Traits of Prospective and Early Career Business Academics (Questionnaire Results)

The following two chapters (Chapter 8 and 9), investigate the results of the online questionnaire phase of this research project. This secondary phase is the final stage of an exploratory sequential mixed methods design, developed to answer two research questions:

- What are the desired employer traits of prospective and early career business academics in Australia?
- What can Australian regional universities do to enhance their attractiveness to prospective and early career business academics?

The questionnaire includes a list of employer traits which determine employer attractiveness. The catalogue of traits was initially developed through comprehensive review of the extant literature relating to employer branding, analysis of the traits used in other studies of desirable employer brand characteristics. This was done through the lens of, and in collaboration with, literature pertaining to the academic vocation. The literature pertaining to the academic vocation in Australia deals with job design, mobility, and the attractiveness of the vocation as a whole (see Chapter 2 of this thesis). The intention is that determination of set of traits that are seen as desirable could be used by schools of business and law to increase their attractiveness as an employer.

The questionnaire was disseminated to prospective respondents using the internet survey platform, SurveyMonkey. It was sent to identified early career academics and current PhD students in schools of business and law at all of Australia universities, in order to test the attractiveness of employer traits identified in the qualitative phase of this research with the wider population of early career academics and PhD students in schools of business and law at Australia's universities. The questionnaire was completed by 540 respondents. The questionnaire data has been analysed using the statistics software package SPSS to uncover relevant results which will inform the research questions. Ultimately, the questionnaire results validate the traits determined through the analysis of the interviews.

To answer the first research question, the results from a Likert scale question asking respondents to rate employer traits were examined alongside results from a question asking respondents to

select their 'top 3' most important traits for organisational attractiveness. The results were interrogated for patterns that allowed for segmentation of the prospective employee market. Segmenting the market would ultimately allow the employer brand to be built around those organisational traits most valued by that segment. Or, the findings could be used to target employer branding at particular segments, by prioritising the values held by that group as the most important.

8.1 Rated Traits

To determine the desired employer traits of prospective and early career business academics, respondents were asked to score each organisational trait on a Likert scale where 1 = very unattractive and 5 = very attractive. The results for this question are shown in Table 8.1.

Table 8-1 Desirability of Organisational Traits

	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job allows for work/life balance	536	4.59	0.72
Job allows for autonomy	537	4.55	0.64
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	538	4.5	0.71
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	536	4.5	0.69
Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	539	4.48	0.67
Internally focussed and flexible in response to change. Friendly and positive. Leaders behave like coaches / mentors, supporting and guiding subordinates.	540	4.37	0.81
Performance / support / opportunity in research	539	4.33	0.74
Job allows for focus on research	540	4.32	0.75
Job allows for minimal administrative workload	536	4.31	0.88
High Salary	539	4.21	0.77
Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects	539	4.2	0.86
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	539	4.19	0.7
Externally focussed and flexible in response to change. A dynamic workplace. Leaders foster creativity and stimulate innovation.	538	4.15	0.87
Opportunity to lead projects and tasks	540	4.15	0.72
Reputation / status / rank of the University	538	4.09	0.71
Performance / support / opportunity in teaching	536	3.98	0.83
Inner Metropolitan location	537	3.98	1.02
Social responsibility / community engagement / public good	537	3.84	0.84
Job allows for focus on teaching	538	3.81	0.96
Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design, modern technology are provided.	539	3.81	0.77
Outer Metropolitan location	534	3.39	0.93
Coastal regional Australia location	536	3.35	1.08
Internally focussed and controlled. Structured and formal. Leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks.	538	2.75	1.11
Inland regional Australia location	534	2.57	1.01
Externally focussed and controlled. A competitive workplace where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition.	538	2.26	1.13

The results indicate that the five highest rated organisational traits (with the highest first) are:

- Job allows for work/life balance (valid n 536, mean 4.59, standard deviation .72)
- Job allows for autonomy (Valid n 537, Mean 4.55, Standard Deviation .64)
- Secure/permanent/tenured employment (valid n 538, mean 4.50, standard Deviation .71)
- Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development (valid n 536, mean 4.50, standard deviation .69)
- Expert colleagues to learn from/work with (valid n 539, mean 4.48, standard deviation .67).

These top five highest rated traits align with key traits identified in the interview phase of the study. The high value on work/life balance by respondents reflects the concern over excessive workloads and work hours for academic staff in Australia, cited in Chapter 2 of this thesis. Secure/permanent/tenured employment was also referred to in discussions regarding the attractiveness of the academic vocation in Chapter 2, and elucidated in the qualitative phase, where respondents suggested that this was a key driver of attractiveness as it enabled the realisation of personal endeavours, such as buying a house, and settling in a community, but also lowed focus on work productivity and performance rather than the work contract or finding securing employment. The importance of opportunity for career growth, promotion and professional development is also not surprising, given that it featured prominently in the qualitative phase of the study, and the knowledge-building orientation of those that pursue a career in academia. The inclusion of expert colleagues to learn from and work with in the top five traits again reflects the knowledge building mindset of those who pursue academic careers, but also that reality that research productivity and funding can be contingent of access to more senior academic staff who are successful in grant applications and have strong publication records.

For the purposes of comparison, it is also valuable to identify those traits not considered to be attractive to potential staff. The five lowest rated organisational traits (with the lowest first) are:

- Culture that is externally focussed and controlled. A competitive workplace where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition (valid n 548, mean 2.26, standard deviation 1.13)
- Inland regional Australia location (valid n 534, mean 2.57, standard deviation 1.01)
- Culture that is internally focussed and controlled. Structured and formal. Leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks. (valid n 538, mean 2.75, standard deviation 1.11)

- Coastal regional Australia location (valid n 536, mean 3.35, standard deviation 1.08)
- Outer Metropolitan location (valid n 534, mean 3.39, standard deviation .93)

The externally focussed and controlled culture, that is competitive and leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition was anticipated to return low results, given that contemporary HRM theory and practice have found more transformative leadership behaviours and more positive, collegial organisational cultures to be more conducive to job satisfaction. The lack of attractiveness to inland regional locations is not surprising, given the metrocentric thinking prevalent in society which sees regional areas as in a state of decline (discussed in Chapter 3). In fact, even in the interviews with regionally based academic staff, there was recognition given to the idea that those in the city would not enjoy life in the regional location. The low yield for coastal regional Australia location was unexpected, as the lifestyle drawcard including aspects such as the beach, weather, traffic and/or scenery were expected to be of greater value for respondents. However, the relative metropolitan location population density of respondents may be justification for these results. The inclusion of outer metropolitan location in the lower traits is unexpected, but perhaps unremarkable, as it is a moderate response (not inner metropolitan and not regional). Unfortunately for the RUN institutions, these low results for location confirm the expected lack of attraction to regional locations. This is concerning for RUN universities, as it means attracting talented academic staff to regional locations may be difficult.

8.2 Selected Most Important Traits

To further examine and test the most important traits for employer attractiveness, respondents were asked to select the three most important traits that contribute. This analysis was intended to further validate the identification of those traits which are most attractive for the attraction of early career and prospective academic staff to regional university schools of business and law. While largely consistent with the previous question, the results indicate some variance in terms of which five traits are the most important (this time, as a count of the most commonly selected).

Table 8-2 The Five Most Important Traits for Employer Attractiveness

	Count	% of Full Sample
Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors	**238**	**44.10%**
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	**174**	**32.20%**

Performance / support / opportunity in research	**168**	**31.10%**
Job includes or allows for work/life balance	**131**	**24.30%**
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	**111**	**20.60%**
Reputation / status / rank of the University	**105**	**19.40%**
High Salary	**88**	**16.30%**
Job includes or allows for a focus on research	**87**	**16.10%**
Job includes or allows for autonomy	**69**	**12.80%**
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	**67**	**12.40%**
Culture that is dynamic where leaders foster creativity and stimulate innovation	**66**	**12.20%**
Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	**63**	**11.70%**
Performance / support / opportunity in teaching	**44**	**8.10%**
Employer's Inner Metropolitan Australia location	**44**	**8.10%**
Job includes or allows for a focus on teaching	**37**	**6.90%**
Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects	**33**	**6.10%**
Social responsibility / community engagement / public good	**30**	**5.60%**
Job includes or allows for minimal administrative workload	**21**	**3.90%**
Employer's Coastal regional Australia location	**15**	**2.80%**
Opportunities to lead projects and tasks	**11**	**2.00%**
Culture that is structured and formal where leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks	**6**	**1.10%**
Employer's Outer Metropolitan Australia location	**4**	**0.70%**
Culture that is competitive where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition	**3**	**0.60%**
Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design, modern t	**3**	**0.60%**
Employer's Inland regional Australia location	**2**	**0.40%**

The highest 5 traits identified in this question were:

- Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors (count 238, percentage of full sample 44.1 per cent)
- Secure / permanent / tenured employment (count 174, percentage of full sample 32.2 per cent)
- Performance / support / opportunity in research (count 168, percentage of full sample 31.1 per cent
- Job includes or allows for work/life balance (count 131, percentage of full sample 24.3 per cent)
- Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department (count 111, percentage of full sample 20.6 per cent)

There are many similarities to the findings of this question, and the previous question where respondents were asked to rank traits on a Likert scale. Respondents again placed emphasis on a

friendly, positive culture where leaders behave like mentors and coaches; job security; and work/life balance. In this question, we see the emergence of the job allowing for a focus on research as an important organisational trait, reflecting the drive of early career academics and PhD students to forge a research profile and career. This question also sees the importance of the reputation/status/rank of my discipline/school/department enter the list of top five traits. Responses in the qualitative interviews indicated that early career academics and PhD see themselves as aligned with a discipline or school, on par with their belongingness to the university.

As with the previous question, it is valuable to explore the lowest traits identified for university attractiveness, as it would be logical to not pursue, or build the employer brand, on these constructs. The lowest 5 traits identified in this question were:

- Employer's inland regional Australia location (count 2, percentage of sample 0.4 per cent)
- Culture that is competitive where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition (count 3, percentage of sample 0.6 per cent)
- Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design (count 3, percentage of sample 0.6 per cent)
- Employer's Outer Metropolitan Australia location (count 4, percentage of sample 0.7 per cent)
- Culture that is structured and formal where leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks (count 6, percentage of sample 1.1 per cent)

Unfortunately, the low yields of these responses continues to spell trouble for Australia's regional inland university locations. As with the previous question which used a Likert scale to value organisational traits, analysis of the least selected traits supports that academic staff prefer not to be engaged with a culture that is competitive, where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition, perhaps because this is at odds with the notions of autonomy and supports which feature in the top traits for each of the first two questions. The relative unimportance of workplace facilities and features found in the qualitative interviews is supported by the low count of respondents for this trait in the questionnaire phase, indicating that this trait is indeed seen as a bonus, and not fundamental to attractiveness. This is a valuable finding as it has implications for employer branding activities to not focus heavily on these aspects. The lowest

five traits identified in this question also includes the culture that is structure and formal where leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks, another trait at odds with the highly valued trait of autonomy, and its alternative, a culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like mentors and coaches. This specifically indicates that academic staff have little interest or affinity toward people, process and task coordination, which could be conceived as a manifestation of managerialism. The impacts of managerialism in higher education are discussed in Chapter 2.

8.3 Integration of Rated and Selected Most Important Traits

For the purpose of creating a complete and comprehensive answer to the research question, "What are the desired employer traits of prospective and early career business academics in Australia?", the results from the highest rated and most commonly selected traits have been integrated. Examining the results of both the Likert scale ranking and top 3 traits identification questions, we can see that:

- Job allows for work/life balance was ranked highest in the Likert scale and fourth highest in the top traits.
- Job allows for autonomy (Valid n 537, Mean 4.55, Standard Deviation .64) ranked second in the Likert scale, but ninth in the top traits identification (count 69, percentage of full sample 12.8 per cent)
- Secure/permanent/tenured employment was ranked third in the Likert scale, and second in the top traits.
- Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development (valid n 536, mean 4.50, standard deviation .69) was ranked fourth in the Likert scale, but tenth in the top traits identification (count 67, percentage of full sample 12.4 per cent)
- Expert colleagues to learn from/work with was ranked fifth in the Likert scale, but twelfth in the top traits identification (count 63, percentage of full sample 11.7 per cent)
- Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors (count 238, percentage of full sample 44.1 per cent) was ranked first in the top traits identification, but sixth in the Likert scale (valid n 540, mean 4.37, standard deviation .81)
- Performance / support / opportunity in research was ranked third in the top traits, but seventh in the Likert scale (valid n 539, mean 4.33, standard deviation .74)

- Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department was ranked fifth in the top traits, but twelfth in the Likert scale (valid n 539, mean 4.19, standard deviation .70)

Examining the results of both the Likert scale ranking and the lowest counts from the top 3 traits question, we can see that:

- Culture that is externally focussed and controlled, a competitive workplace where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition had the lowest mean Likert scale score, and had the second lowest response rate of any trait in the top traits question.
- Inland regional Australia location had the second lowest mean in the Likert scale, and was lowest in the top traits selected.
- A culture that is internally focussed and controlled, structured and formal, where leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks, was ranked third lowest in the Likert scale, and fifth lowest in the top traits selected.
- Coastal regional Australia location was ranked fourth lowest in the Likert scale, but seventh lowest in the top traits selected (count 15, percentage of full sample 2.8 per cent)
- Outer Metropolitan location was ranked fifth lowest in the Likert scale, and fourth lowest in the top traits selected.
- Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design was ranked fifth lowest in the top traits selected, but seventh lowers in the Likert scale (valid n 539, mean 3.81, standard deviation .77).

Ultimately, these results provide a robust set of traits deemed to be attractive to potential employees, and those which may either have little effect on, or even hamper attractiveness. The key drivers of attractiveness are identified as:

1. Job allows for work/life balance
2. Job allows for autonomy
3. Secure/permanent/tenured employment
4. Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development
5. Expert colleagues to learn from/work with
6. Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors
7. Performance / support / opportunity in research

8. Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department

These results align with the findings of the interview phase of this research. The apparent incongruence between the top traits and the lowest traits identified show that academic staff crave work/life balance, autonomy, secure employment, a drive to learn and grow a research provide and be supported in this endeavour through a positive and supportive organisational culture. The drive to be associated with a discipline/school/department with a high reputation/status/rank may also be aligned with the individual's career and growth aspirations, seeing this as an enabler of research performance and status.

8.4 Segmentation

To allow for employer branding targeted towards a particular sentiment, or to identify those segments for a which a particular employer trait may be leveraged, the ratings for the all employer traits were examined using a number of variables that could be used for segmentation: preferred location of employment, gender, nationality, experience in a regional location, importance of location, partner income and qualifications, self-evaluation of employment, PhD completion, university affiliation, age, experience working in a university, and discipline.

8.4.1 Preferred Location of Employment

It was considered valuable to evaluate the most important traits for those who prefer a regional location, as those traits which were correlated with preference for metropolitan locations may be of lesser interest to regional universities. A series of MANOVAs were conducted to assess the effects of preferred location for employment (inner metropolitan, outer metropolitan, inland regional, or coastal regional) on university trait attractiveness ratings.

Table 8-3 Important Traits Based on Regional Location

	Inner Metropolitan			Outer Metropolitan			Inland Regional			Coastal Regional		
Organisational Trait	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Reputation / status / rank of the University	326	4.18	.71	76	4.01	.72	27	3.70	.72	106	3.95	.65
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	326	4.28	.68	76	4.12	.69	27	3.93	.96	106	4.08	.67
Performance / support / opportunity in research	326	4.41	.67	76	4.25	.83	27	4.07	.92	106	4.20	.81
Performance / support / opportunity in teaching	326	3.98	.82	76	3.96	.84	27	3.89	.75	106	4.01	.88
Social responsibility / community engagement / public good	326	3.82	.81	76	3.83	.87	27	3.89	.80	106	3.90	.94

With Preferred Location as the independent variable and the five organisational traits as the dependent variables, a significant main effect of Preferred Location was found for the reputation/status/rank of the university ($F(3, 531) = 6.09$, $p < .001$), the reputation/status/rank of my discipline/school/department ($F(3, 531) = 4.29$, $p = .005$), and performance/support/opportunity in research ($F(3, 531) = 3.71$, $p = .012$). Attractiveness ratings for performance/support/opportunity in teaching ($F < 1$) and social responsibility/community engagement/public good ($F < 1$) did not vary as a function of preferred location for employment. Subsequent pairwise comparisons using Bonferroni t showed that For Reputation/status/rank of the university – those preferring inner metropolitan considered this trait significantly more attractive than those preferring inland regional ($p = .005$); those preferring inner metropolitan also considered this trait significantly more attractive than those preferring coastal regional ($p = .026$). With reputation/status/rank of the university being particularly important for those in metropolitan locations, when RUN institutions are recruiting staff to their metropolitan campuses, it may be worthwhile emphasising any positive reputation/status/rank factors for the university in employer branding activities.

The relationship between organisational culture traits and location preference were also examined. With Preferred Location as the independent variable and the four organisational culture traits as the dependent variables, a significant main effect of Preferred Location was found for internally focussed and flexible in response to change ($F(3, 534) = 2.91$, $p = .034$) and internally focussed and controlled ($F(3, 534) = 3.35$, $p = .019$). Attractiveness ratings for externally focussed

and controlled (F < 1) and externally focussed and flexible in response to change (F < 1) did not vary as a function of preferred location for employment. Subsequent pairwise comparisons (Bonferroni t) did not find any significant differences between preferred locations for each of these traits. Generally, all respondents indicated a preference for a culture that was internally focussed and flexible in response to change, followed by externally focussed and flexible in response to change. The data indicates considerably lower mean scores for both internally and externally focussed and controlled cultural traits.

Job design traits including the job allowing focus on research, focus on teaching, autonomy, minimal administrative workload, work/life balance, and opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects were analysed.

Table 8-4 Job Design Traits Based on Regional Location

	Inner Metropolitan			**Outer Metropolitan**			**Inland Regional**			**Coastal Regional**		
Job Design Trait	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Job allows for focus on research	321	4.44	.68	76	4.30	.73	27	4.07	.78	106	4.04	.87
Job allows for focus on teaching	321	3.82	.99	76	3.78	.84	27	3.67	.88	106	3.80	.95
Job allows for autonomy	321	4.58	.63	76	4.62	.52	27	4.37	.56	106	4.43	.70
Job allows for minimal administrative workload	321	4.37	.82	76	4.36	.80	27	4.04	1.09	106	4.20	1.00
Job allows for work/life balance	321	4.63	.68	76	4.66	.53	27	4.30	.95	106	4.52	.86
Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects	321	4.21	.88	76	4.13	.84	27	3.74	.86	106	4.33	.76

With Preferred Location as the independent variable and the six job design traits as the dependent variables, a significant main effect of Preferred Location was found for "Job allows for focus on research" ($F(3, 526) = 9.03$, $p < .001$) and "Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects" ($F(3, 526) = 3.62$, $p = .013$). Pairwise comparisons (Bonferroni t) showed:

- For "Job allows for focus on research" – those preferring inner metropolitan considered this trait significantly more attractive than those preferring coastal regional ($p < .001$)
- For "Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects" – those preferring inner metropolitan considered this trait significantly more attractive than those preferring inland regional ($p = .035$); those preferring coastal regional also considered this trait significantly more attractive than those preferring inland regional ($p = .009$)

The results indicate that those preferring a coastal regional location were less concerned about the job allowing for a focus on research, informing the design of the employer brand for universities in these locations. The findings also reveal that those preferring inland regional locations were not particularly interested in the job allowing for work overseas on exchange or projects. With this in mind, when recruiting for metropolitan based roles, it would be sensible for schools of business and law to place more emphasis on the job allowing a focus on research, and the job allowing for opportunities to work overseas.

Employment traits of expert colleagues to learn from/work with, opportunity to lead projects and tasks; high salary; secure / permanent / tenured employment; opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development; and workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design and modern technology were analysed in terms of their relationship with preferred employment location.

Table 8-5 Employment Traits Based on Regional Location

	Inner Metropolitan			**Outer Metropolitan**			**Inland Regional**			**Coastal Regional**		
Employment Trait	***n***	***M***	***SD***	***n***	***M***	***SD***	***n***	***M***	***SD***	***n***	***M***	***SD***
Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	325	4.52	.68	77	4.45	.60	27	4.22	.85	106	4.46	.62
Opportunity to lead projects and tasks	325	4.21	.68	77	4.08	.77	27	4.00	.68	106	4.07	.78
High Salary	325	4.25	.78	77	4.29	.76	27	3.81	.74	106	4.13	.76
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	325	4.54	.68	77	4.65	.62	27	4.11	.75	106	4.41	.79
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	325	4.54	.64	77	4.61	.61	27	4.22	.75	106	4.39	.83
Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design, modern technology are provided.	325	3.80	.76	77	4.00	.76	27	3.59	.57	106	3.78	.77

With Preferred Location as the independent variable and the six employment traits as the dependent variables, a significant main effect of Preferred Location was found for:

- High Salary ($F(3, 531) = 3.28$, $p = .021$): pairwise comparisons showed those preferring inner metro considered this trait more attractive than those preferring inland regional ($p = .029$); those preferring outer metro also considered this trait more attractive than those preferring inland regional ($p = .038$)
- Secure / permanent / tenured employment ($F(3, 531) = 4.85$, $p = .002$): pairwise comparisons showed those preferring inner metro considered this trait more attractive than those preferring inland regional ($p = .016$); those preferring outer metro also considered this trait more attractive than those preferring inland regional ($p = .004$)
- Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development ($F(3, 531) = 3.43$, $p = .017$): no significant group/location preference differences after error correction, but pattern of results is similar.

These results indicate that salary is particularly important for those preferring inner metropolitan employment, perhaps reflecting the relative cost of living in these areas, similarly, the importance placed on secure employment may be related to the cost of mortgages and rent in metropolitan areas. Those preferring regional location still value secure employment very highly. However, the number of respondents preferring coastal or inland regional locations was quite small, and many may also ready be based in these locations, so segmenting on this consideration would not be sensible. With these factors in mind, universities looking to recruit staff in metropolitan areas may need to emphasise salary and secure employment particularly.

8.4.2 Gender

The Science in Australia Gender Equity (SAGE) pilot is a program which aims to promote gender equality and diversity in academia (SAGE, 2018). As part of the program, universities in Australia are applying for accreditation in the Athena SWAN award (SAGE, 2018). At the same time, the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) encourages and monitors gender equality in organisations operating in Australia (WGEA, 2018). With programs and agencies such as these in place, targeting employer branding initiatives towards women may be seen as desirable. As such, comparison of the top traits identifies by females versus males was conducted to identify any key gender differences. For the purposes of this analysis, the 'Other' category was removed. Differences in ratings between males and females were tested using a series of MANOVAs (with

Gender as the independent variable). Results for Organisational Traits showed females gave significantly higher attractiveness ratings than males on:

- Performance / support / opportunity in research, $F(1, 528) = 4.43$, $p = .036$
- Performance / support / opportunity in teaching, $F(1, 528) = 5.17$, $p = .023$
- Social responsibility / community engagement / public good, $F(1, 528) = 10.47$, $p = .001$

Table 8-6 Organisational Traits Based on Gender

	Females			Males		
Organisational Trait	***n***	***M***	***SD***	***n***	***M***	***SD***
Reputation / status / rank of the University	298	4.13	.67	232	4.02	.76
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	298	4.19	.67	232	4.19	.74
Performance / support / opportunity in research	298	4.38	.72	232	4.25	.78
Performance / support / opportunity in teaching	298	4.05	.81	232	3.89	.82
Social responsibility / community engagement / public good	298	3.94	.84	232	3.70	.83

Results for culture traits showed females gave significantly higher ratings than males on Internally focussed and flexible in response to change, $F(1, 531) = 15.45$, $p < .001$. In contrast, males gave significantly higher ratings than females on Internally focussed and controlled ($F(1, 531) = 11.38$, $p = .001$) and Externally focussed and controlled ($F(1, 531) = 5.15$, $p = .024$).

Table 8-7 Results for Culture Traits Based on Gender

	Females			Males		
Culture Trait	***n***	***M***	***SD***	***n***	***M***	***SD***
Internally focussed and flexible in response to change	298	4.49	.70	235	4.22	.90
Internally focussed and controlled	298	2.61	1.11	235	2.93	1.09
Externally focussed and controlled	298	2.16	1.08	235	2.39	1.18
Externally focussed and flexible in response to change	298	4.20	.85	235	4.07	.89

Results for Job Design Traits showed no significant differences in trait ratings between females and males, while results for Employment Traits showed females gave significantly higher ratings than males on "Opportunity to lead projects and tasks", $F(1, 528) = 9.04$, $p = .003$.

Table 8-8 Employment Traits Based on Gender

	Females			Males		
Employment Trait	***n***	***M***	***SD***	***n***	***M***	***SD***

Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	295	4.53	.70	235	4.42	.62
Opportunity to lead projects and tasks	295	4.23	.72	235	4.04	.70
High Salary	295	4.17	.74	235	4.25	.82
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	295	4.51	.67	235	4.49	.76
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	295	4.55	.68	235	4.44	.70
Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design, modern technology are provided.	295	3.88	.70	235	3.74	.83

Results on Location Traits showed no significant differences in ratings between females and males. A Chi-square test revealed a non-significant result, $\chi 2$ (3, N = 535) = 3.74, p = .292, indicating no relationship between gender and preferred location of employment.

The analysis of variance in gender resulted in significant differences only in performance / support opportunity in research, performance / support / opportunity in teaching and social responsibility / community engagement / public good. Performance/support/opportunity in research was ranked in the top 5 traits among all respondents. It is possible that these results, particularly performance / support / opportunity in teaching and social responsibility / community engagement / public good are interesting, could be emphasised in employer branding activities if universities are endeavouring to increase the participation of females in academic ranks.

8.4.1 Nationality

The pursuit of university internationalisation exists at most universities, with a strategic plan in this domain found at 91 per cent of institutions (Egron-Polak and Hudson, 2014). Davis and Mackintosh (2011) indicate that the pursuit of internationalisation has been evident at Australian universities for more than 25 years. The diversity of academic staff is by no means a key measure of internationalisation, but the networks, partnerships and knowledge that staff born overseas possess may be utilised by the university in its pursuit of internationalisation. For this reason, the results were explored for any trends in trait preferences for staff born overseas, in comparison with those born in Australia.

A Chi-square test showed a significant result, $\chi 2$ (3, N = 540) = 13.89, p = .003, indicating a significant relationship between nationality and preferred location of employment. In particular, those born in Australia were significantly more likely to prefer an Inland Regional location than those born overseas. There were no significant differences between Australia-born and overseas-

born for other locations. Both those born in Australia and those born overseas were least likely to prefer an Inland Regional location.

Table 8-9 Preferred Regional Location Based on Nationality

Nationality		**Preferred Location of Employment**			
		Inner metropolitan	**Outer metropolitan**	**Inland regional**	**Coastal regional**
Australian	*n*	136	27	20	51
	% Australian	58.1%	11.5%	8.5%	21.8%
	% Full Sample	25.2%	5.0%	3.7%	9.4%
Overseas-Born	*n*	193	50	7	56
	% Overseas-Born	63.1%	16.3%	2.3%	18.3%
	% Full Sample	35.7%	9.3%	1.3%	10.4%

The consideration of regional universities for overseas-born respondents compared with Australian-born was also analysed. Focusing on only those who would consider working at a regional university or would prefer a regional university (i.e., "This is an employer of choice for me"), and looking at each of the 6 regional universities separately using Chi-square tests, reveals that for the University of Southern Queensland, Australia-born respondents were significantly more likely to prefer employment here than overseas-born respondents, but there was no difference for considering working at this university. For all other regional universities, there was no significant relationship between Australia-born and overseas-born in likelihood of considering or preferring a regional university as an employer.

Because the number of respondents indicating a regional university as an employer of choice was small, this test was conducted by converting this variable to a continuous scale where 1 = I would prefer not to work here, 2 = I do not know enough about this employer, 3 = I would consider working and here 4 = This is an employer of choice for me. Independent-groups t-tests showed no significant differences between Australia-born and overseas-born in the extent to which they would consider working at a regional university for each regional university as well as the average across all 6 regional universities.

As universities seek to enhance their internationalisation, attracting and recruiting international staff may be of benefit both for their knowledge and background, but for prospective networks and partnerships with global collaborators. The greater lack of interest in regional locations for those born overseas may be attributed to the lower levels of cultural diversity in these regional centres (as discussed in Section 3.2).

8.4.2 Experience in a Regional Location

During the interviews, anecdotal comments from respondents indicated that individuals who had previously lived in a regional area may be more interested in pursuing employment with a regional university. With this in mind, analysis was conducted on the respondents to the questionnaire to examine this relationship.

A Chi-square test revealed a significant result, $\chi 2$ (6, N = 536) = 112.29, p < .001, indicating a significant relationship between having lived in an inland regional town and preferred location of employment. Specifically, results showed those who have lived in an inland regional town for more than 5 years were more likely to prefer an inland regional location than those who have not lived in an inland regional town.

Table 8-10 Preferred Location of Employment Based on Prior Areas of Residence

Ever Lived in an Inland Regional Town		**Preferred Location of Employment**			
		Inner metropolitan	**Outer metropolitan**	**Inland regional**	**Coastal regional**
No	*n*	273	62	4	73
	% No	66.3%	15.0%	1.0%	17.7%
	% Full Sample	50.9%	11.6%	0.7%	13.6%
Yes, less than 5 years	*n*	30	8	3	17
	% Yes, < 5 years	51.7%	13.8%	5.2%	29.3%
	% Full Sample	5.6%	1.5%	0.6%	3.2%
Yes, more than 5 years	*n*	23	7	20	16
	% Yes, > 5 years	34.8%	10.6%	30.3%	24.2%
	% Full Sample	4.3%	1.3%	3.7%	3.0%

A Chi-square test revealed a significant result, $\chi 2$ (6, N = 536) = 58.40, p < .001, indicating a significant relationship between having lived in a coastal regional town and preferred location of employment. Specifically, results showed those who have lived in a coastal regional town for more than 5 years were more likely to prefer a coastal regional location than those who have not lived in a coastal regional town.

Table 8-11 Preferred Location of Employment Based on Prior Coastal Residence

Ever Lived in a Coastal Regional Town		**Preferred Location of Employment**			
		Inner metropolitan	**Outer metropolitan**	**Inland regional**	**Coastal regional**
No	*n*	267	53	21	53
	% No	67.8%	13.5%	5.3%	13.5%
	% Full Sample	49.8%	9.9%	3.9%	9.9%
Yes, less than 5 years	*n*	28	14	2	14
	% Yes, < 5 years	48.3%	24.1%	3.4%	24.1%
	% Full Sample	5.2%	2.6%	0.4%	2.6%
Yes, more than 5 years	*n*	32	9	3	40
	% Yes, > 5 years	38.1%	10.7%	3.6%	47.6%
	% Full Sample	6.0%	1.7%	0.6%	7.5%

These results indicate that regional universities are likely to have more success if employer branding efforts are targeted at those who have experience living in a regional location.

8.4.3 Importance of Location

The importance of location was emphasised by respondents during the interview phase, and it was interesting to note that it remained very important for the larger population in the questionnaire. This might indicate that including location in the employer brand is a crucial factor.

As part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked if location was an important consideration, with the vast majority indicating that indeed it was. Responses to this question were evaluated in line with the respondents indicated preferred employment location to identify any relationships. A Chi-square test showed a significant result, $\chi 2$ (3, N = 540) = 11.00, p = .012, indicating a significant relationship between expressed importance of location and preferred location of employment. Specifically, results showed those indicating "Yes" location is important were significantly more likely to prefer inner metro than those who said "No".

Table 8-12 Importance of Location

Importance of Location		**Preferred Location of Employment**			
		Inner metropolitan	**Outer metropolitan**	**Inland regional**	**Coastal regional**
No	*n*	35	17	6	21
	% No	44.3%	21.5%	7.6%	26.6%
	% Full Sample	6.5%	3.1%	1.1%	3.9%
Yes	*n*	294	60	21	86
	% Yes	63.8%	13.0%	4.6%	18.7%
	% Full Sample	54.4%	11.1%	3.9%	15.9%

The respondents' choice of importance of location was also evaluated in line with their consideration of regional universities. When using responses as a continuous measure – using Independent-groups t-tests, results showed those indicating location is important ("Yes" response) were significantly less likely to consider working at a regional university than those who said location was not important ("No" response). This was the case for each regional university, as well as the overall average across the six regional universities.

Table 8-13 Importance of Location Based on Regional University

	Importance of Location					
	No			**Yes**		
	n	***M***	***SD***	***n***	***M***	***SD***
Central Queensland University	79	2.34	.81	461	2.01	.74
Federation University	79	2.25	.69	461	1.85	.59

Southern Cross University	79	2.32	.71	461	2.05	.77
University of New England	79	2.39	.67	461	2.03	.74
University of Southern Queensland	79	2.42	.74	461	2.09	.78
University of Sunshine Coast	79	2.38	.70	461	2.10	.79
Regional Universities Overall	79	2.35	.51	461	2.02	.54

These results indicate that for those for which location is important, it is the metropolitan location that is paramount. As such, it may not be in the interests of regional universities to focus employer branding efforts on the location.

8.4.4 Partner Income and Qualification

The comparison of income levels, unemployment rates, cost of living and work roles in regional areas in Chapter 3 emphasises the varying economic factors at play in regional locations. It was anticipated that dual career couples (where the partner is earning higher income) may be less attracted to regional locations.

Respondents were asked to provide information pertaining to their partner's income and level of education. This allows us to explore relationships between these and variables and both location preference and consideration of regional universities. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with preferred location as the independent variable and partner's income as the dependent variable revealed a significant main effect of preferred location, $F(3, 350) = 3.08$, $p = .027$. Subsequent pairwise comparisons (Bonferroni t) indicated the mean partner income of those preferring an inner metropolitan location was significantly higher than the mean partner income of those preferring an outer metropolitan location ($p = .048$). In the table below, a higher score in the mean partner's income indicates a greater income level. Unsure responses were excluded from the analysis. Bivariate correlations revealed lower partner income was significantly associated with greater consideration of Central Queensland University ($r(354) = -.14$, $p = .009$) and University of Southern Queensland ($r(354) = -.16$, $p = .002$).

Table 8-14 Relationship between Partner's Income and Preferred Location

Preferred Location	*n*	*M*	*SD*
Inner metropolitan Australia	217	3.27	1.51
Coastal regional Australia	68	3.06	1.54
Inland regional Australia	20	2.65	1.5
Outer metropolitan Australia	49	2.63	1.52

A Chi-square test revealed a non-significant result, $\chi 2$ (3, N = 381) = .71, p = .871, indicating no relationship between partner's qualification and preferred location of employment. For consideration of regional universities, when using responses as a continuous measure – using Independent-groups t-tests, results showed no significant differences in consideration of regional universities based on partner's education level.

The results here indicate that those with a higher income earning partner tend to prefer an inner metropolitan location, perhaps due to the higher rate of managerial and professional roles in metropolitan centres compared with regional areas. In contrast, consideration of the inland RUN institutions, Central Queensland University and University of Southern Queensland, was associated with those whose partners earn lower incomes, perhaps reflective of the lower cost of living in these regional towns. These regional universities may be able to leverage the relatively lower cost of living of their regional campus locations in employer branding. \

8.4.5 Self-evaluation of Employability

There was a concern expressed by respondents during the qualitative interview phase, that regional universities are left to attract only staff that did not think they could get a job elsewhere. To test this concept, respondents were asked to indicate their perception of their own employability. Respondents could select any of these options:

- Very easy. I would likely be offered several positions and have my choice of which to accept.
- Fairly Easy. I would likely be able to attain a position at an Australian university, but may have to apply for a few positions.
- Difficult. It will be difficult for me to get a position at an Australian university. I may have to apply for several positions, and I expect it to take some time for me to find a position.
- Very difficult. I think that I will find it very difficult to get a position at an Australian University, and may have to consider alternatives.

- I don't know.

Converting this variable to a continuous scale, an ANOVA was conducted to assess differences in perceived ease/difficulty of finding a new job and preferred location for employment. Results showed no significant differences based on preferred location, $F(3, 491) = 1.11$, $p = .343$. In the table below, a higher mean score indicates greater difficulty in finding a new job.

Table 8-15 Perceived Ease/Difficulty of Finding a New Job and Preferred Location

Preferred Location	***n***	***M***	***SD***
Coastal regional Australia	95	2.96	0.8
Inland regional Australia	27	2.89	0.8
Inner metropolitan Australia	304	2.83	0.79
Outer metropolitan Australia	69	2.74	0.82

In consideration of regional universities, bivariate correlations showed greater perceived difficulty finding a new job was associated with increased consideration of regional universities overall ($r(495) = .12$, $p = .008$), in particular, Central Queensland University ($r(495) = .13$, $p = .003$), Southern Cross University ($r(495) = .10$, $p = .025$), and University of Southern Queensland ($r(495) = .09$, $p = .037$).

The relationship between employee self-view (How easy do you think it would be for you to find a new academic position at an Australian university?) and the question 'Are there any location/s that you would not consider as a place of employment?' was also examined.

Table 8-16 Perceived Ease/Difficulty of Finding a New Job and Undesirable Locations

Location Would Not Consider	***n***	***M***	***SD***
None	218	2.97	0.77
Inner Metropolitan	32	2.88	0.83
Coastal Regional	85	2.79	0.83
Outer Metropolitan	51	2.76	0.89
Inland Regional	233	2.74	0.8

233 respondents indicated that they would not consider an inland regional location, 218 had no locations they would not consider, 85 would not consider a coastal regional location, 51 would not consider an outer metropolitan location and only 32 would not consider an inner metropolitan location. The higher scores in the mean column indicate greater perceived difficulty in securing an academic position at an Australian university. Respondents indicating that there was no location

they would not consider had the highest mean perceived difficulty of securing employment. It appears that those who would not consider inland regional employment have the highest self-view of employability.

Independent-groups t-tests were conducted to compare perceive ease/difficulty of finding a new job for people who selected and people who did not select each option (see Table below). Results revealed 2 significant effects:

- People who indicated they would consider ALL locations perceived greater difficulty finding a new job than those who did not say this, $t(493) = -3.20$, $p = .001$.
- People who indicated they would NOT consider an Inland Regional location perceived less difficulty finding a new job than those who did not say this, $t(493) = 2.82$, $p = .005$.

Table 8-17 Difficulty Finding a New Job Based on Location

		Difficulty Finding a New Job		
		n	***M***	***SD***
Location None	Not Selected	277	2.74	.80
	Selected	218	2.97	.77
Not Inner Metropolitan	Not Selected	463	2.84	.79
	Selected	32	2.87	.83
Not Outer Metropolitan	Not Selected	444	2.85	.79
	Selected	51	2.76	.89
Not Inland Regional	Not Selected	262	2.94	.79
	Selected	233	2.74	.80
Not Coastal Regional	Not Selected	410	2.86	.79
	Selected	85	2.79	.83

These results indicate that there is potential that employees may see RUN institutions as a satisfactory, but not preferred, pathway to enter the vocation of academia. Respondents with greater concerns regarding their ability to find employment were more willing to consider employment at a RUN institution.

8.4.6 PhD Completion

It was considered possible that those who had not yet completed their PhD held differing views to early career academics in terms of which traits were the most attractive. Analysis was conducted

to compare the organisational traits prioritised by current PhD students in comparison with those who have already completed their PhDs. A series of MANOVAs (for each category of traits: organisation traits, culture traits, job design traits, employment traits and location traits) were conducted with PhD Completion (currently completing or completed) as the independent variable. A significant main effect of PhD Completion was found for Job Design Traits – in particular, "Job allows for focus on teaching" ($F(1, 528) = 15.95$, $p < .001$), and "Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects" ($F(1, 528) = 12.11$, $p = .001$). These results indicate current PhD candidates viewed these 2 traits significantly more attractive than those who have completed their PhD. It is conceivable that those who have completed their PhDs have developed a maturity that perceives teaching not as a means for career progression and job security, and as such do not value this trait as highly. The lure of overseas work on exchange or projects may be more attractive to PhD students who see this as an interesting opportunity, while for those completed, it may seem as an additional strain on an already significant workload. If endeavouring to current PhD students, universities could target their employer brand to incorporate a focus on teaching and the opportunity to work overseas on exchange or projects.

8.4.7 University Affiliation

Given the stratification of higher education in Australia, it was interesting to compare the traits valued by those currently associated with a Go8 university and those currently associated with a RUN university. It was anticipated that those with an affiliation with a research intensive institution would prefer to remain in a similar institution.

A series of MANOVAs were conducted with University affiliation (Go8 or Regional) as the independent variable. Results showed those at a Go8 university considered the following organisational traits to be more attractive than those at a regional university:

- Reputation / status / rank of the University ($F(1, 236) = 30.47$, $p < .001$)
- Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department ($F(1, 236) = 29.13$, $p < .001$)
- Performance / support / opportunity in research ($F(1, 236) = 18.25$, $p < .001$)

In terms of Job design traits: those at a Go8 university rated Job allows for focus on research ($F(1, 235) = 25.42$, $p < .001$) significantly more attractive than those at a regional university. In the employment traits, respondents at a Go8 university rated Expert colleagues to learn from ($F(1, 237)$

= 10.08 , *p* = .002) significantly more attractive than those at a regional university. In terms of Location traits:

- Those at a Go8 university rated Inner Metropolitan significantly more attractive than those at a regional university ($F(1, 237) = 85.73$, $p < .001$)
- On the other hand, those at a regional university rated Inland regional Australia ($F(1, 237) = 13.18$, $p < .001$) and Coastal regional Australia ($F(1, 237) = 22.93$, $p < .001$) significantly more attractive than those at a Go8 University.

Go8 universities and regional universities were also compared with other universities to identify any relationships with preferred location of employment, locations not considered, and trait attractiveness. A Chi-square test showed a significant result, $\chi 2$ (6, N = 517) = 91.29, $p < .001$, indicating a significant relationship between university affiliation and Preferred Location of Employment. In particular, significant differences are observed for:

- Inner Metropolitan Location: those currently working at a Go8 University were more likely to prefer employment in an Inner Metropolitan location than those at other universities and regional universities. Those at other universities were more likely to prefer an Inner Metropolitan location than those in regional universities.
- Inland Regional Location: Those at regional universities were more likely than those at other universities to prefer an inland regional location; and those at other universities were more likely than those at Go8 universities to prefer an inland regional location.
- Coastal Regional Location: those at regional and other universities were more likely to prefer a coastal regional location than those at Go8 universities.

Table 8-18 Relationship Between Preferred Location and Type of University

		University		
		Regional	**Go8**	**Others**
Inner metropolitan Australia	n	11	146	157
	% within University	20.4%	78.1%	56.9%
Outer metropolitan Australia	n	11	21	40
	% within University	20.4%	11.2%	14.5%
Inland regional Australia	n	13	1	12
	% within University	24.1%	.5%	4.3%
Coastal regional Australia	n	19	19	67

	% within University	35.2%	10.2%	24.3%

When examining locations not considered and university affiliation, Chi-square tests revealed a significant effect for:

- Inner Metropolitan location, χ^2 (2, N = 517) = 32.14, p < .001 – specifically, those working at a regional university were more likely to indicate they would not consider an Inner Metropolitan location than those at Other Universities and Go8 Universities (the difference between Go8 and other universities was also significant).
- Inland Regional location, χ^2 (2, N = 517) = 7.36, p = .025 – those working at a regional university were less likely to indicate they would not consider an Inland Regional location than those at a Go8 university.

Table 8-19 Locations Not Considered and University Affiliations

	University					
Location Not Considered	**Regional**		**Go8**		**Others**	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
None	25	46.3%	79	42.2%	120	43.5%
Inner metropolitan Australia	12	22.2%	1	0.5%	23	8.3%
Outer metropolitan Australia	6	11.1%	23	12.3%	23	8.3%
Inland regional Australia	17	31.5%	98	52.4%	131	47.5%
Coastal regional Australia	4	7.4%	43	23.0%	45	16.3%

University affiliation was examined in relationship with consideration of regional universities. A one-way ANOVA was conducted with University (Go8, Regional or Others) as the independent variable and the mean consideration scores across the 6 regional universities as the dependent variable. Results revealed a significant main effect of University Affiliation, F (2, 514) = 17.40, p < .001. Subsequent pairwise comparisons (Bonferroni t' correction) showed that a greater mean for regional universities compared with Go8 universities, a greater mean for regional universities compared with other universities, and a greater mean for other university compared with Go8 universities. Those associated with regional universities were more likely to consider a regional university than those at other universities and Go8 universities. Subsequently, a MANOVA was

conducted with University Affiliation (Go8, Regional or Other) as the independent variable and the scores for each regional university as the dependent variables. A significant main effect of University was found for each regional university. Subsequent pairwise comparisons showed that the mean for regional university affiliation was greater for Go8 for all RUN universities, and the mean for regional affiliation was also greater for all other universities, with the exception of Federation University. Federation University's variance here may be attributable to its geographic isolation from the RUN member institutions.

A series of MANOVAs was conducted to examine the relationship between university affiliation and trait attractiveness. Again, MANOVAs were conducted for each category of traits: organisation traits, culture traits, job design traits, employment traits and location traits. Significant differences (pairwise comparisons) were found for:

- Reputation / status / rank of the University: Go8 mean greater than Regional, and Go8 mean greater than Others
- Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department: Go8 mean greater than Regional, Go8 mean greater than Others, and Others mean greater than Regional.
- Performance / support / opportunity in research: Go8 mean greater than Regional, and Go8 mean greater than Others
- Job allows for focus on research: Go8 mean greater than Regional, Go8 mean greater than Others, and Others mean greater than Regional.
- Expert colleagues to learn from/work with: Go8 mean greater than Regional, and Go8 mean greater than Others
- Inner Metropolitan location: Go8 mean greater than Regional, Go8 mean greater than Others, and Others mean greater than Regional.
- Inland regional Australia location: Regional mean greater than Go8; Regional mean greater than Others.
- Coastal regional Australia location: Regional mean greater than Go8 and Others; Others mean greater than Go8

The overwhelming trend of this data is the priority based on research, reputation and career aspects by those associated with the more research intensive universities. This result was to be

expected as the selection of university brand for PhD studies may have been inspired by similar values alignment to that which we expect in the choice of preferred employer brand. This means that attracting research focussed individuals from research intensive universities to RUN institution is going to be very challenging.

8.4.8 Age Group

Results were compared across age groups. A Chi-square test showed a significant result, χ^2 (6, N = 526) = 18.63, p = .005, indicating a significant relationship between Age Group and Preferred Location of Employment. In particular, significant differences are observed for:

- Inner Metropolitan Location: Those born between 1965 -1981 and those born between 1982 – 2000 were significantly more likely to prefer an Inner Metropolitan location compared to those born between 1955 – 1964.
- Coastal Regional Location: more respondents born between 1955 - 1964 preferred a Coastal Regional area than those born between 1982 – 2000.

Table 8-20 Age Groups and Preferred Location

		Age Group		
		Born 1955 – 1964	**Born 1965 – 1981**	**Born 1982 - 2000**
Inner metropolitan Australia	n	40	140	146
	% within Age Group	45.5%	60.9%	70.2%
Outer metropolitan Australia	n	15	34	26
	% within Age Group	17.0%	14.8%	12.5%
Inland regional Australia	n	7	12	5
	% within Age Group	8.0%	5.2%	2.4%
Coastal regional Australia	n	26	44	31
	% within Age Group	29.5%	19.1%	14.9%

In terms of locations not considered, Chi-square tests revealed a significant result only for Inner Metropolitan location, χ^2 (2, N = 526) = 9.74, p = .008 – specifically, those born 1955 - 1964 were more likely than born 1965 - 1981 or those born 1982 - 2000 to indicate they would not consider an Inner Metropolitan location.

Table 8-21Age Groups and Locations Not Considered

	Age Group					
Location Not Considered	**Born 1955 – 1964**		**Born 1965 – 1981**		**Born 1982 - 2000**	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
None	44	50.0%	105	45.7%	82	39.4%
Inner metropolitan Australia	12	13.6%	11	4.8%	10	4.8%
Outer metropolitan Australia	7	8.0%	26	11.3%	18	8.7%
Inland regional Australia	37	42.0%	103	44.8%	109	52.4%
Coastal regional Australia	14	15.9%	37	16.1%	41	19.7%

For consideration of regional universities, a MANOVA indicated no significant differences among the age groups (in their responses for each regional university. A one-way ANOVA of the aggregated (mean) scores across the 6 regional universities also indicated no significant difference ($F(2, 523) = 2.56$, $p = .078$).

A series of MANOVAs indicated many differences in the evaluation of traits between the different age groups. Significant effects of age group were found for:

- Reputation / status / rank of the University: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 - 2000, with the younger respondents valuing this trait higher.
- Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 - 2000, and those born 1965-1981. In each case, the younger respondents valued this trait higher.
- Performance / support / opportunity in research: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 – 2000, with the younger generating valuing this trait higher.
- Internally focussed and controlled: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 – 2000, with the younger generation valuing this trait higher.

- Job allows for focus on research: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 – 2000, and those born 1965-1981. In each case, the younger generation valued this trait higher.
- Job allows for focus on teaching: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1965 – 1981 and those born 1982 – 2000, with the older generation valuing this higher.
- Job allows for minimal administrative workload: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 – 2000, with the younger generation valuing this trait higher.
- Job allows for work/life balance: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 – 2000, and those born 1965-1981. In each case, the younger generation valued this trait higher.
- High Salary: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 – 2000, and those born 1965-1981. In each case, the younger generation valued this trait higher.
- Secure / permanent / tenured employment: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and those born 1965-1981, with the younger generation valued this trait higher.
- Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 – 2000, and those born 1965-1981. In each case, the younger generation valued this trait higher.
- Inner Metropolitan location: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 – 2000, and those born 1965-1981. In each case, the younger generation valued this trait higher.
- Inland regional Australia location: pairwise comparison indicates a significant difference between those born 1955 – 1964 and 1982 – 2000, with the older generation valuing this trait higher.

These results indicate that there are differences in the desired organisational traits of potential employees, based on their age. Given the challenge of the ageing population, there is sense in endeavouring to attract younger employees to the RUN institutions. With this in mind, younger

employees tend to show particular interest in the research focus performance and reputation related traits.

8.4.9 Experience Working at University

The respondent's previous experience working in a university setting was examined for preferred location of employment, locations not considered, consideration of regional universities and trait attractiveness. A Chi-square test showed a non-significant result, $\chi 2$ (3, N = 540) = 1.90, p = .593, indicating Preferred Location of Employment did not differ between those who have worked and those who have not worked at a university before.

Table 8-22Previous Experience and Preferred Location of Employment

		Worked at Uni Before	
		No	**Yes**
Inner metropolitan Australia	n	39	290
	% within Worked at Uni Before	67.2%	60.2%
Outer metropolitan Australia	n	5	72
	% within Worked at Uni Before	8.6%	14.9%
Inland regional Australia	n	3	24
	% within Worked at Uni Before	5.2%	5.0%
Coastal regional Australia	n	11	96
	% within Worked at Uni Before	19.0%	19.9%

In examining the relationship between university experience and locations would not consider, Chi-square tests revealed a significant result only for Coastal Regional Location, χ^2 (1, N = 540) = 4.86, p = .027 – specifically, those who have worked at a university before were more likely to indicate they would not consider a coastal regional location (compared to those who have not worked at a university before).

Table 8-23 Previous Experience and Preference for Coastal Locations

	Worked at University Before			
Location Not Considered	**No**		**Yes**	
	n	%	n	%
None	24	41.4%	212	44.0%

Inner metropolitan Australia	2	3.4%	35	7.3%
Outer metropolitan Australia	4	6.9%	51	10.6%
Inland regional Australia	31	53.4%	223	46.3%
Coastal regional Australia	4	6.9%	89	18.5%

For consideration of regional universities as employers, Results from independent-groups t-tests showed no significant differences between those who have worked and those who have not worked at a university before (when looking at each regional university separately, as well as the 6 regional universities combined).

As with the analysis of relationships between other variables, a series of MANOVAs were conducted for each category of traits. Significant differences were found for:

- Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department, with those having not previously worked at a university yielding a higher mean.
- Internally focussed and controlled, with those having not previously working at a university yielding a higher mean.
- Job allows for autonomy, with those having worked at a university previously yielding a higher mean.
- High Salary, with those having not previously working at a university yielding a higher mean.

The results here show a variance in difference for those with previous experience working in a university and those without. The variance in value placed on reputation/status/rank of my discipline/school/department may be attributable to the realisation of those with experience in the industry that this reputation factor does not make a major difference to the realities of work therein. Those without work experience in a university also placed greater emphasis on the internally focussed and controlled culture that is focussed and flexible in response to change, that is friendly and positive, where leaders behave like leaders and coaches, again possibly because those with work experience have learnt to operate in cultures that may not exercise such as virtues. The indication of salary for those having not previously worked at a university may be the result of a consideration of employment outside of academia where salaries are higher. Meanwhile, the experienced staff demonstrates greater importance in autonomy, perhaps

reflecting a desire to be able to operate under their own devices regardless of the pervading organisational culture.

8.4.10 Discipline

The final analysis conducted was to examine any relationship between discipline area and preferred location of employment, locations not considered, consideration of regional universities and trait attractiveness. To examine preferred location of employment, a Chi-square test was used. It showed a non-significant result, $\chi 2$ (3, N = 540) = 6.53, p = .088, indicating Preferred Location of Employment did not differ between those in Law and other business disciplines. Chi-square tests of locations not considered also revealed no significant differences between those in Law and other business disciplines. As with other analyses presented for the evaluation of trait attractiveness, a series of MANOVAs (one for each category of traits) was conducted. Significant differences (pairwise comparisons) were found for:

- Performance / support / opportunity in teaching, which yielded a higher mean in law than the other disciplines.
- Social responsibility / community engagement / public good, which yielded a higher mean in law than the other disciplines.
- Externally focussed and controlled, which yielded a lower mean in law than the other disciplines.
- Job allows for autonomy, which yielded a higher mean in law than other disciplines.
- Job allows for work/life balance, which yielded a higher mean in law than other disciplines.
- Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design, modern technology are provided, which yielded a lower mean in law than in other disciplines.

The higher result for teaching in law may reflect the history of law schools in Australia, where often academic staff were not PhD qualified but rather teaching focussed with industry expertise. The intrinsic connection between law and social responsibility (through the segue of justice) may explain the higher yield for law academics in this domain. The higher results for work/life balance for law academics, may be reflective of those respondents choosing an academic career over a career in legal practice, which is renowned for its long work hours and lack of work/life balance.

8.5 Summary

This chapter provides analysis of results to an online questionnaire completed by 540 prospective and early career academic staff. The primary intent of this questionnaire was to determine the employer traits which this target population considered most important when evaluating the attractiveness of employers. Principally, two key questions within the questionnaire have informed the findings, the first question asked respondents to rate a series of employer traits using a Likert scale with a range from 1 (not attractive) to 5 (very attractive). As such, each employer trait could be measured for its importance to respondents. Initially, the top five mean scores in this question were selected to be considered the most important traits. To add validity to the determination of important traits, the results to this question were compared with the results to a secondary question, which asked respondents to select the three most important traits that drove employer attractiveness. The results to this question yielded similar responses, however, there was some variance. Given the variance, a comparison between the traits with the highest means and those that were most often selected were combined. Those that featured in the top five (either by mean or by count) were compared in terms of their importance in the other question. Unsurprisingly, the traits continued to be ranked very highly, just beyond the top 5. The integration of results led to the identification of eight key traits that determine employer attractiveness for prospective and early career academics in schools of business and law in Australia. This analysis of questionnaire results has provided robust confirmation of the desired traits of prospective and early career academic staff in business and law. The eight traits identified through the analysis are:

1. Job allows for work/life balance
2. Job allows for autonomy
3. Secure/permanent/tenured employment
4. Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development
5. Expert colleagues to learn from/work with
6. Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors
7. Performance / support / opportunity in research
8. Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department

Chapter 5 of this thesis, which details with the concept of employer branding, discusses the importance of differentiation in the process of developing and implementing an employer branding. This concept was integrated with the notion of strategic HRM (see Chapter 4) which emphasises the importance of talented human capital in the determination and realisation of strategic goals. With this in mind, it would be valuable to be able to segment the market and target employer branding to this market. Alternatively, it may be valuable in some cases to determine which segments of the market would be most responsive to particular employer traits. For example, if the strategy was to open a campus in a metropolitan area, segmentation would allow the employer to identify those traits which are seen as valuable to those who prefer an inner metropolitan location. Or, alternatively, if the strategy was to attract female employees, their preferences could be identified and the traits that were emphasised as most important for this segment focussed on in employer branding activities. Key segment based findings were discovered for those with particularly preferred locations of employment, gender, nationality, experience in a regional location, that placed great importance of location, partner income, PhD completion, university affiliation, age group, experience working in a university and discipline area. These segment based findings are provided in sections 8.4.1 through to 8.4.10.

9.0 Enhancing the Attractiveness of Australian Regional Universities for Prospective and Early Career Business Academics (Questionnaire Results)

As with the previous chapter, the purpose of this chapter is to elucidate the results of a questionnaire completed by prospective and early career academics in schools of business and law. At this point, a robust solution to the first research question has been provided (see Chapter 8), but the question of 'What can Australian regional universities do to enhance their attractiveness to prospective and early career business academics?' remains. To answer this question, exploration of three key areas was conducted: respondents' consideration of regional universities, traits regional universities need to improve, and segmentation. As with the analysis conducted of responses for the first research question, the interpretation of results in this section draw on the adaptive theory approach utilised across the thesis. To come up with a solution to the second research question, the analytical approach involved determining the most important employer traits identified by those respondents to the questionnaire who expressed that they would consider or prefer employment at a regional university. As such, the traits evaluated are the same as those in Chapter 8 of this thesis, which were developed following a comprehensive literature review (see Chapters 1 to 5) regarding the academic vocation, human capital and employer branding.

9.1 Consideration of Regional Universities

In answering the research question of 'What can Australian regional universities do to enhance their attractiveness to prospective and early career business academics?', it was first important to determine how respondents evaluated regional universities as prospective employers. A question was designed to evaluate the employer brand awareness of respondents regarding the RUN institutions, along with respondents' willingness to consider employment at each of the RUN institutions, and if these institutions were considered an employer of choice for respondents. If the aforementioned key traits for organisational attractiveness could be correlated with those who would prefer or consider employment with a regional university, it would elucidate those traits which RUN schools of business and law could focus on in the development of their employer brand and ultimately their attractiveness to prospective employees.

The questionnaire asked respondents if they would not consider, would consider or would prefer to work at each of the RUN institutions. Respondents were also afforded the option of selecting that they did not know enough about the employer. 275 respondents (50.9 per cent) indicated that they did not know about Central Queensland University, 345 (63.9 per cent) indicated that they did not know enough about Federation University, 268 (46.9) did not know about Southern Cross University, 283 (52.4 per cent) did not know enough about the University of New England, 267 (52.4 per cent) did not know enough about University of Southern Queensland, and 270 (50.0 per cent) did not know enough about the University of the Sunshine Coast. These results indicate that a large number and proportion of respondents, despite being insiders to the university sector, have limited brand awareness of the RUN institution as employers.

The data was also analysed for those that indicated that a particular regional university was their employer of choice. 16 respondents indicated Central Queensland University, 6 Federation University, 16 Southern Cross University, 13 University of New England, 23 University of Southern Queensland, and 23 University of the Sunshine Coast. The number of respondents for these institutions is quite low, but the results align with those anticipated based on the results discussed in section 9.2.

Respondents indicating a preference for Central Queensland University prioritised the job allowing for autonomy, opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development; reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department; performance / support / opportunity in research and an Internally focussed and flexible in response to change, friendly and positive, where leaders behave like coaches / mentors, supporting and guiding subordinates. The next most significant trait for these respondents was Performance / support / opportunity in teaching (valid n 16, mean 4.13, standard deviation 1.15). This priority given to performance / support / opportunity in teaching yielded a higher mean than that collected for all questionnaire respondents (valid n 536, mean 3.98, standard deviation .83). The universities inland regional location yielded a relatively low mean of 3.06 (valid n 16, standard deviation 1.12).

Table 9-1 Organisational Traits for Preferred University - Central Queensland University

	Central Queensland University
	This is an employer of choice for me

	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job allows for autonomy	16	4.44	1.03
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	16	4.38	.81
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	16	4.25	1.00
Performance / support / opportunity in research	16	4.25	1.06
Internally focussed and flexible in response to change. Friendly and positive. Leaders behave like coaches / mentors, supporting and guiding subordinates.	16	4.25	1.06

The organisational traits identified by those preferring Federation University again aligned with those identified as key drivers of organisational attractiveness.

Table 9-2 Organisational Traits for Preferred University - Federation University

	Federation University		
	This is an employer of choice for me		
	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job allows for work/life balance	6	4.17	1.60
Job allows for autonomy	6	4.00	1.55
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	6	4.00	.63
Job allows for minimal administrative workload	6	3.83	1.47
Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects	6	3.83	1.47

Those preferring Southern Cross University yielded a mean of 4.19 (valid n 16, standard deviation .75) for the organisational trait 'Coastal regional Australia location'. The other highly valued organisational traits are similar to the other results.

Table 9-3 Organisational Traits for Preferred University - Southern Cross University

	Southern Cross University		
	This is an employer of choice for me		
	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job allows for work/life balance	16	4.44	1.09

Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	16	4.38	.72
Internally focussed and flexible in response to change. Friendly and positive. Leaders behave like coaches / mentors, supporting and guiding subordinates.	16	4.31	1.08
Job allows for autonomy	16	4.25	1.13
Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects	16	4.19	1.11

The University of New England, which is based in Armidale, an inland regional town in New South Wales, yielded a similarly high mean of 4.31 (valid n 13, standard deviation .63) for "Coastal regional Australia location", but its actual location (inland regional Australia) attracted a mean of 3.69 (valid n 13, standard deviation 1.11), indicating a possible respondent tolerance for inland locations for those who see University of New England as an employer of choice. The remaining highest means align with the expected results.

Table 9-4 Organisational Traits for Preferred University - University of New England

	University of New England		
	This is an employer of choice for me		
	Valid N	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	13	4.54	.78
Job allows for work/life balance	13	4.54	1.13
Externally focussed and flexible in response to change. A dynamic workplace. Leaders foster creativity and stimulate innovation.	13	4.46	1.20
Job allows for autonomy	13	4.38	1.19
Job allows for focus on research	13	4.31	1.18

For those who see the University of Southern Queensland as an employer of choice, the highest mean employer traits align with those found in other results.

Table 9-5 Organisational Traits for Preferred University - University of Southern Queensland

	University of Southern Queensland
	This is an employer of choice for me

	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job allows for work/life balance	23	4.61	.89
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	23	4.48	.67
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	23	4.43	.90
Job allows for autonomy	23	4.43	.95
Internally focussed and flexible in response to change. Friendly and positive. Leaders behave like coaches / mentors, supporting and guiding subordinates.	23	4.30	1.02

The results collected from respondents who consider the University of the Sunshine Coast an employer of choice again align with the other results collected. The universities regional coastal location may be a drawcard, with the mean 'Coastal regional location' coming in as the sixth highest at 4.13 (valid n 23, standard deviation .76).

Table 9-6 Organisational Traits for Preferred University - University of the Sunshione Coast

	University of the Sunshine Coast		
	This is an employer of choice for me		
	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job allows for work/life balance	23	4.57	.95
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	23	4.30	.88
Job allows for autonomy	23	4.22	1.04
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	23	4.17	1.11
Internally focussed and flexible in response to change. Friendly and positive. Leaders behave like coaches / mentors, supporting and guiding subordinates.	23	4.17	1.11

The results for those respondents that would consider employment at the regional universities is higher than those who would prefer employment at the regional universities, and provides interesting insights. For those who would consider employment at Central Queensland University, the top five traits identified were the job allowing for work/life balance; secure/permanent/tenured employment; the job allowing for autonomy; opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development; and an organisational culture that is internally focussed and flexible in response to change, that is friendly and positive, where leaders

behave like coaches / mentors, supporting and guiding subordinates. The five highest mean attractiveness traits for those who would consider Central Queensland University are reflected in the eight key drivers of organisational attractiveness identified earlier. Those in the eight missing from the top five are Expert colleagues to learn from/work with; Performance / support / opportunity in research; and Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department. Expert colleagues to learn from/work with is the sixth highest mean for those who would consider Central Queensland University (valid n 124, mean 4.40, standard deviation .58). Performance / support / opportunity in research is the tenth highest mean (valid n 124, mean 4.22, standard deviation .72), still above its teaching counterpart (Performance / support / opportunity in teaching is the 15th highest mean with valid n 123, mean 4.09 and standard deviation .75).

Table 9-7 Desired Organisational Traits - Central Queensland University

	Central Queensland University		
	I would consider working here		
	Valid N	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Job allows for work/life balance	124	4.56	.68
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	124	4.55	.69
Job allows for autonomy	124	4.49	.73
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	124	4.45	.69
Internally focussed and flexible in response to change. Friendly and positive. Leaders behave like coaches / mentors, supporting and guiding subordinates.	124	4.42	.65

The scenario at Federation University is similar. Unlike the 124 respondents that indicated that they would consider employment at Central Queensland University, only 65 indicated the same for Federation University. Again, all five of the organisational traits identified align with the eight identified earlier. As with Central Queensland University, Expert colleagues to learn from/work with, Performance / support / opportunity in research and Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school department attract marginally lower means. Expert colleagues to learn is the sixth highest mean (valid n 65, mean 4.42, standard deviation .64), while Performance / support / opportunity in research was ninth (valid n 65, mean 4.25, standard deviation .73).

Table 9-8 Desired Organisational Traits - Federation University

	Federation University		
	I would consider working here		
	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	65	4.54	.75
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	65	4.54	.64
Job allows for autonomy	65	4.54	.71
Job allows for work/life balance	64	4.53	.73
Internally focussed and flexible in response to change. Friendly and positive. Leaders behave like coaches / mentors, supporting and guiding subordinates.	65	4.51	.64

137 respondents indicated that they would consider employment at Southern Cross University. This data indicates that those who would consider this university place greater emphasis on expert colleagues to learn from/work with than those who would consider Central Queensland University or Federation University. Again, the five highest means align with 8 key drivers of attractiveness identified. Those absent in the top 5 are, culture that is friendly where leaders behave like coaches/mentors (which is the sixth highest mean, valid n 137, mean 4.36, standard deviation .84); Performance / support / opportunity in research (seventh highest, valid n 137, mean 4.29 and standard deviation .68) and Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school department (11th highest, valid n 137, mean 4.18, standard deviation of .7).

Table 9-9 Desired Organisational Traits - Southern Cross University

	Southern Cross University		
	I would consider working here		
	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job allows for work/life balance	137	4.63	.65
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	137	4.53	.72
Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	137	4.49	.57
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	137	4.45	.79
Job allows for autonomy	137	4.45	.71

As with Southern Cross University, respondents who would consider University of New England placed emphasis on expert colleagues to work. 131 respondents indicated a preparedness to

consider employment with University of New England. A culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors is not part of the highest five means, but comes in as the sixth highest (valid n 131, mean 4.34, standard deviation .79). Others of the 8 key drivers of organisational attractiveness were also considered highly by these respondents. Performance / support / opportunity in research was the seventh highest mean (valid n 131, mean 4.30, standard deviation .70). The reputation / status/ rank of my discipline / school / department was the tenth highest (valid n 131, mean 4.21, standard deviation .66).

Table 9-10 Desired Organisational Traits - University of New England

	University of New England		
	I would consider working here		
	Valid N	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Job allows for work/life balance	130	4.52	.66
Job allows for autonomy	131	4.51	.66
Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	131	4.47	.55
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	131	4.45	.71
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	131	4.36	.79

140 respondents indicated that they would consider working at University of Southern Queensland. In keeping with those who would consider employment at Southern Cross University and the University of New England, staff who would consider this university placed greatest value on the job allowing for work/life balance; secure / permanent / tenured employment; the job allowing for autonomy; opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development; and expert colleagues to learn from/work with. A culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors was the seventh highest mean identified (valid n 140, mean 4.31, standard deviation .82). Performance / support / opportunity in research was the eight highest mean (valid n 140, mean 4.24, standard deviation .74). Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department was the twelfth highest mean (valid n 140, mean 4.18, standard deviation .69). The organisational trait, which is not part of the 8 key drivers of attractiveness identified earlier, which was valued most highly by those that would consider University of Southern Queensland was that the Job allows for minimal administrative workload (valid n 140, mean 4.32, standard deviation .77)

Table 9-11 Desired Organisational Traits - University of Southern Queensland

	University of Southern Queensland		
	I would consider working here		
	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job allows for work/life balance	140	4.58	.61
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	140	4.48	.74
Job allows for autonomy	140	4.46	.68
Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	140	4.46	.57
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	140	4.44	.73

138 respondents indicated a preparedness to consider employment at the University of the Sunshine Coast. Job allows for work/life balance; Job allows for autonomy; Secure/permanent/tenured employment; Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development; and Expert colleagues to learn from/work with yielded the highest means. Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors again was the sixth highest mean (valid n 139, mean 4.42, standard deviation .80), Performance / support / opportunity in research was the 8th highest mean (valid n 138, mean 4.32, standard deviation .73), and Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department the 13th highest mean (valid n 137, mean 4.20, standard deviation .74).

Table 9-12 Desired Organisational Traits - University of the Sunshine Coast

	University of the Sunshine Coast		
	I would consider working here		
	Valid N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job allows for work/life balance	138	4.63	.62
Job allows for autonomy	138	4.57	.65
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	138	4.54	.65
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	138	4.54	.67
Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	138	4.48	.58

In this question, the organisational trait which is not part of the 8 key drivers of attractiveness identified earlier, which was valued most highly by those that would consider each university was

that the Job allows for minimal administrative workload (Central Queensland University valid n 123, mean 4.33, standard deviation .81; Federation University valid n 65, mean 4.28, standard deviation .78; Southern Cross University valid n 135, mean 4.35; University of New England valid n 130, mean 4.30, standard deviation .78; University Southern Queensland valid n 139, mean 4.32, standard deviation .77; University of the Sunshine Coast valid n 137, mean 4.39, standard deviation .75). This usurps the seventh highest mean overall for all questionnaire respondents which was Job allows for focus on research (valid n 540, mean 4.32 and standard deviation .75).

The table below shows the ranking of overall highest means, and how they compare with those that would consider employment at each of the regional universities:

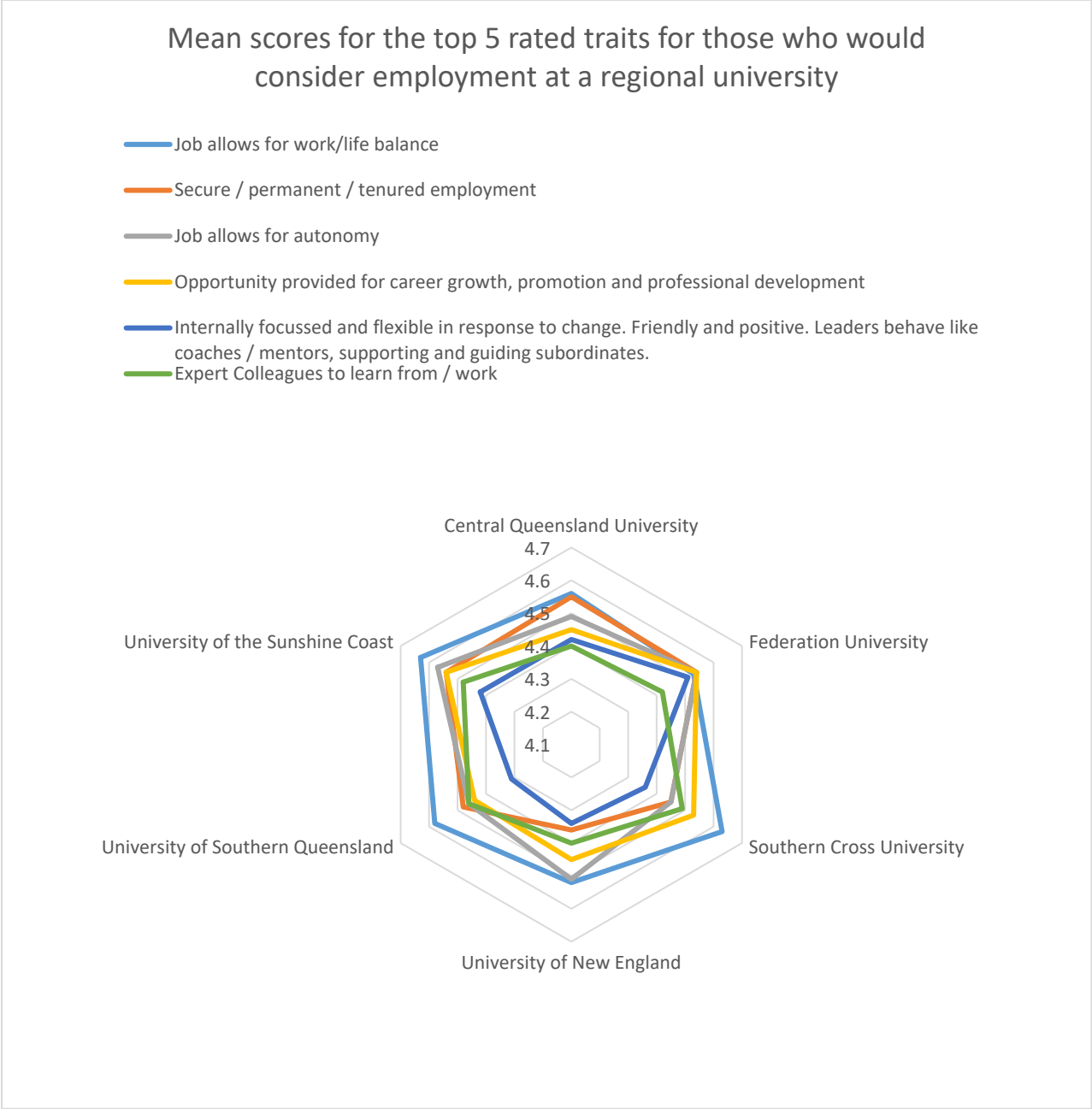
Table 9-13 A Comparison of Overall Organisational Traits and Considered Employment at Regional Universities

	Overall	Central Queensland University	Federation University	Southern Cross University	University of New England	University of Southern Queensland	University of the Sunshine Coast
Job allows for work/life balance	1	1	4	1	1	1	1
Job allows for autonomy	2	3	3	5	2	3	2
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	3	2	1	4	5	2	3
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	4	4	2	2	4	5	4
Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	5	6	6	3	3	4	5
Internally focussed and flexible in response to change. Friendly and positive. Leaders behave like coaches / mentors, supporting and guiding subordinates.	6	5	5	6	6	7	6
Performance / support / opportunity in research	7	10	9	8	8	8	8
Job allows for focus on research	8	8	8	10	10	9	11
Job allows for minimal administrative workload	9	7	7	7	7	6	7
High Salary	10	12	10	13	14	11	9
Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects	11	9	13	9	9	10	10

The data collected reveals that for those who would prefer or consider regional universities for employment, the attractive organisational traits are largely consistent with the attractiveness of all organisational traits. There is indication that for RUN institutions, greater emphasis is placed on work/life balance. Perhaps the regional locations are perceived by respondents as being more conducive to a balanced lifestyle. This is consistent with findings from the qualitative research, which indicated that regional locations provided easy transport to and from work, a relaxed and calm lifestyle, and escape to beaches and nature. The individualised results for each university may be able to be utilised by schools of business and law in the construction of their employer brand.

The spider graph below shows the spread of mean scores for each trait for those that would consider employment at each of the RUN institutions. The spider graph shows the high importance placed on all the traits at each of the RUN universities. The graph reveals that for University of the Sunshine Coast, University of Southern Queensland and Southern Cross University in particular, work/life balance is a key determinant of attractiveness, and something that can be leveraged.

Table 9-14 Top Five Rated Organisational Traits for Employment at a Regional University



In response to the research question, "What can Australian regional universities do to enhance their attractiveness to prospective and early career business academics?" this research suggests that those traits determined in the research question "What are the desired employer traits of prospective and early career business academics in Australia?" continue to apply, albeit with different and varying weightings when considering each of the RUN institutions. This finding suggests that there is convergence in terms of the 'what academics want' from their university

employers, but also specific traits that universities can seek to promote in order to attract organisational staff to the organisation.

9.2 Traits Regional Universities Need to Improve

Respondents to the questionnaire were asked to "Select the three most important factors regional universities could improve to enhance their attractiveness as an employer". The results for this question are provided here.

The data indicates that the top 5 traits regional universities need to improve are the reputation/status/rank of the university, high salary, performance/support/opportunity in research, reputation/status/rank of my discipline/school/department, and secure/permanent/tenured employment.

Table 9-15 Top Five Traits Regional Universities Need to Improve Employer Attractiveness

	n	% (out of 540)
Reputation / status / rank of the University	178	32.96%
High Salary	172	31.85%
Performance / support / opportunity in research	162	30.00%
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	153	28.33%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	146	27.04%
Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors	127	23.52%
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	105	19.44%
Job includes or allows for a focus on research	104	19.26%
Job includes or allows for work/life balance	90	16.67%
Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	82	15.19%
Culture that is dynamic where leaders foster creativity and stimulate innovation	58	10.74%
Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects	46	8.52%
Performance / support / opportunity in teaching	41	7.59%
Job includes or allows for autonomy	36	6.67%

Social responsibility / community engagement / public good	31	5.74%
Job includes or allows for minimal administrative workload	24	4.44%
Job includes or allows for a focus on teaching	23	4.26%
Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design, modern…	23	4.26%
Opportunities to lead projects and tasks	12	2.22%
Culture that is structured and formal where leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks	4	0.74%
Culture that is competitive where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition	3	0.56%

Analysis by gender showed similar results for both males and females, with the top 5 traits regional universities need to improve still being the reputation/status/rank of the university, high salary, performance/support/opportunity in research, reputation/status/rank of my discipline/school/department, and secure/permanent/tenured employment.

Table 9-16 Top Five Traits Regional Universities Need to Improve Employer Attractiveness - By Gender

	Female		**Male**		**Other**	
	n	**% (out of 298)**	**n**	**% (out of 237)**	**n**	**% (out of 5)**
Reputation / status / rank of the University	93	31.21%	81	34.18%	4	80.00%
High Salary	92	30.87%	79	33.33%	1	20.00%
Performance / support / opportunity in research	88	29.53%	72	30.38%	2	40.00%
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	80	26.85%	70	29.54%	3	60.00%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	74	24.83%	70	29.54%	2	40.00%

Analysis by age showed some differences. Respondents born between 1946 and 1954 (n 14), placed greater value on a friendly and positive culture, and a dynamic culture. Those born between 1955 and 1964 (n 88) again selected the positive and friendly culture, and opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development. For those born between 1965 and 1981,

high salary was the most selected option. For those respondents born between 1982 and 2000, the job including or allowing for a focus on research entered the top 5.

Table 9-17 Organisational Traits Regional Universities Need to Improve Employer Attractiveness - By Age

	1946 – 1954		1955 – 1964		1965 – 1981		1982 – 2000	
	n	**% (out of 14)**	**n**	**% (out of 88)**	**n**	**% (out of 230)**	**n**	**% (out of 208)**
Reputation / status / rank of the University	4	28.57%	14	15.91%	78	33.91%	82	39.42%
High Salary	1	7.14%	16	18.18%	83	36.09%	72	34.62%
Performance / support / opportunity in research	1	7.14%	22	25.00%	71	30.87%	68	32.69%
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	4	28.57%	17	19.32%	62	26.96%	70	33.65%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	3	21.43%	19	21.59%	76	33.04%	48	23.08%
Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors	7	50.00%	38	43.18%	51	22.17%	31	14.90%
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	2	14.29%	19	21.59%	46	20.00%	38	18.27%
Job includes or allows for a focus on research	1	7.14%	16	18.18%	45	19.57%	42	20.19%
Expert colleagues to learn from/work with	1	7.14%	12	13.64%	32	13.91%	37	17.79%
Job includes or allows for work/life balance	1	7.14%	15	17.05%	47	20.43%	27	12.98%
Culture that is dynamic where leaders foster creativity and stimulate innovation	4	28.57%	15	17.05%	22	9.57%	17	8.17%

Job allows for opportunities to work overseas on exchange or projects	2	14.29%	12	13.64%	11	4.78%	21	10.10%
Job includes or allows for autonomy	2	14.29%	6	6.82%	12	5.22%	16	7.69%
Social responsibility / community engagement / public good	2	14.29%	12	13.64%	5	2.17%	12	5.77%
Performance / support / opportunity in teaching	2	14.29%	14	15.91%	17	7.39%	8	3.85%
Workplace facilities / features such as gym membership, child care, food, leisure spaces, modern office design, modern…	1	7.14%	3	3.41%	8	3.48%	11	5.29%
Job includes or allows for a focus on teaching	2	14.29%	6	6.82%	9	3.91%	6	2.88%
Job includes or allows for minimal administrative workload	2	14.29%	4	4.55%	9	3.91%	9	4.33%
Opportunities to lead projects and tasks	0	0.00%	2	2.27%	5	2.17%	5	2.40%
Culture that is competitive where leaders use reward and punishment to foster performance and competition	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.43%	2	0.96%
Culture that is structured and formal where leaders coordinate people, processes and tasks	0	0.00%	2	2.27%	0	0.00%	2	0.96%

The data was also analysed based on the birthplace of the respondent (born in Australia or overseas). For those born in Australia, the top 5 selected traits included the culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors. Meanwhile, for those born overseas, the Reputation/status/rank of the university was actually the most important factor (by just over 10 per cent).

Table 9-18 Top Five Traits Regional Universities Need to Improve Employer Attractiveness - By Nationality

			Australian		Others-Overseas-Born	
			n	% (out of 234)	n	% (out of 306)
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department			65	27.78%	88	28.76%
Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors			65	27.78%	62	20.26%
High Salary			64	27.35%	108	35.29%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment			62	26.50%	84	27.45%
Performance / support / opportunity in research			61	26.07%	101	33.01%
Reputation / status / rank of the University			59	25.21%	119	38.89%

Analysis of responses from those affiliated with a regional university were compared with those affiliated with a Go8, and those affiliated with other universities. For those affiliated with a RUN institution, the culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors was the most selected most important factor for regional universities to improve, while responses from those with Go8 affiliation aligned with the overall most selected (Reputation / status / rank of the University; High Salary; Performance / support / opportunity in research; Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department; and Secure / permanent / tenured employment). For those affiliated with other universities, the culture that is friendly and supportive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors again entered the top 5 most selected traits.

Table 9-19 Top Five Traits Regional Universities Need to Improve Employer Attractiveness - by University Afflilation

	Regional		Go8		Others		
	n	% (out of 54)	n	% (out of 187)	n	% (out of 276)	

Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors	25	46.30%	23	12.30%	76	27.54%	
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	17	31.48%	45	24.06%	79	28.62%	
Performance / support / opportunity in research	15	27.78%	61	32.62%	78	28.26%	
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	15	27.78%	70	37.43%	59	21.38%	
Job includes or allows for a focus on research	11	20.37%	32	17.11%	55	19.93%	
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	11	20.37%	35	18.72%	54	19.57%	
Reputation / status / rank of the University	10	18.52%	80	42.78%	77	27.90%	

The data was also analysed to compare the results of law academics with those from other business disciplines. While there was some reordering, the top 5 traits selected were consistent for both groups.

Table 9-20 Top Five Traits Regional Universities Need to Improve Employer Attractiveness - by discipline

	Law		**Other business disciplines**	
	n	**% (out of 110)**	**n**	**% (out of 430)**
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	41	37.27%	112	26.05%
High Salary	36	32.73%	136	31.63%
Reputation / status / rank of the University	32	29.09%	146	33.95%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	32	29.09%	114	26.51%
Performance / support / opportunity in research	24	21.82%	138	32.09%

Analysis comparing current PhD students with early career academics revealed that, despite some variance in order, the top 5 selected traits were consistent.

Table 9-21 Top Five Traits Regional Universities Need to Improve Employer Attractiveness - by PhD Students and Early Career Academics

	Current		**Completed**	
	n	**% (out of 304)**	**n**	**% (out of 236)**

Reputation / status / rank of the University	110	36.18%	68	28.81%
High Salary	93	30.59%	79	33.47%
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	86	28.29%	67	28.39%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	85	27.96%	61	25.85%
Performance / support / opportunity in research	78	25.66%	84	35.59%

Results were analysed to compare the varying self-employability ratings. Those who perceived finding a job to be very easy, saw opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development enter the top 5 most selected traits. However, the number of respondents falling into this category was quite low (n 16). Those whose self-employability rating was that they would find employment fairly easy included a friendly and positive culture 39 times (n 153), pushing this trait into the top 5 of the 3 most important factors for regional universities to improve, while it was the sixth highest trait for those who thought finding employment would be difficult, and third most selected trait for those who thought finding employment would be very difficult and fifth most important for those that didn't know how easy or difficult it would be to gain employment.

Respondents indicated that to enhance regional university employer attractiveness, regional universities should look to improve:

- Reputation/status/rank of the University
- Reputation/status/rank of my discipline/school/department
- High Salary
- Secure/permanent/tenured employment
- Performance/support/opportunity in research
- Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors

Table 9-22 Self-Employability Ratings and Organisational Traits

		Very Easy		**Fairly Easy**		**Difficult**		**Very difficult**		**Don't know**	
		n	**% (out of 16)**	**n**	**% (out of 153)**	**n**	**% (out of 218)**	**n**	**% (out of 108)**	**n**	**% (out of 45)**

High Salary		4	25.00%	58	37.91%	68	31.19%	26	24.07%	16	35.56%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment		4	25.00%	37	24.18%	67	30.73%	26	24.07%	12	26.67%
Performance / support / opportunity in research		5	31.25%	49	32.03%	67	30.73%	34	31.48%	7	15.56%
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department		6	37.50%	39	25.49%	64	29.36%	31	28.70%	13	28.89%
Reputation / status / rank of the University		7	43.75%	59	38.56%	61	27.98%	34	31.48%	17	37.78%
Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors		4	25.00%	38	24.84%	45	20.64%	32	29.63%	8	17.78%

The data was also analysed for those who were (and were not) the parent, guardian or carer for any dependents. For those with children, culture entered the top 5 at the expense of reputation/status/rank of my discipline/school/department.

Table 9-23 Organisational Traits to Enhance Employer Attractiveness for Parents, Guardians or Carers

Select the three most important factors regional universities could improve to enhance their attractiveness as an employer	**Are you currently the parent, guardian or carer for any dependents?**			
	Yes		**No**	
	n	**% (out of 225)**	**n**	**% (out of 315)**
Performance / support / opportunity in research	73	32.44%	89	28.25%
Reputation / status / rank of the University	68	30.22%	110	34.92%
High Salary	67	29.78%	105	33.33%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	65	28.89%	81	25.71%
Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors	57	25.33%	70	22.22%

Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	49	21.78%	104	33.02%

For those who indicated that their role as a parent, guardian or carer would prevent them from considering employment at a university in regional Australia, high salary topped the list of most selected traits, but again there was no variance between the five highest traits selected by this group, and those that indicated that their parent/guardian/carer role would not limit their consideration of a regional university, or those that were unsure.

Table 9-24 Organisational Traits to Enhance Employer Attractiveness and Encourage Parents, Guardians or Carers to Consider Employment

Select the three most important factors regional universities could improve to enhance their attractiveness as an employer	**Would your role as a parent, guardian or carer prevent you from considering employment at a university in regional Australia?**							
	No		**Yes**		**Unsure**		**I am already employed at a university in regional Australia**	
	n	**% (out of 80)**	**n**	**% (out of 97)**	**n**	**% (out of 22)**	**n**	**% (out of 26)**
High Salary	19	23.75%	40	41.24%	6	27.27%	2	7.69%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	18	22.50%	36	37.11%	4	18.18%	7	26.92%
Reputation / status / rank of the University	28	35.00%	28	28.87%	8	36.36%	4	15.38%
Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors	15	18.75%	25	25.77%	4	18.18%	13	50.00%
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	14	17.50%	23	23.71%	7	31.82%	5	19.23%

The same pattern was found for those whose partner's situation would prevent them from consider regional employment. For these respondents, again high salary rocketed to the top of the most selected traits.

Table 9-25 Organisational Traits to Enhance Employer Attractiveness and Consideration of Partner's Situation

Select the three most important factors regional universities could improve to enhance their attractiveness as an employer	**Would your partner's situation prevent you from considering employment at a university in regional Australia?**							
	No		**Yes**		**Unsure**		**I am already employed at a university in regional Australia**	
	n	**% (out of 133)**	**n**	**% (out of 165)**	**n**	**% (out of 52)**	**n**	**% (out of 37)**
High Salary	33	24.81%	71	43.03%	17	32.69%	0	0.00%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	31	23.31%	52	31.52%	13	25.00%	11	29.73%
Reputation / status / rank of the University	55	41.35%	51	30.91%	21	40.38%	6	16.22%
Performance / support / opportunity in research	41	30.83%	46	27.88%	14	26.92%	13	35.14%
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	37	27.82%	45	27.27%	17	32.69%	9	24.32%

The data was also compared with those who did and did not find location to be an important consideration when considering working for a particular university. For those not concerned about location, the organisational culture was more important.

Table 9-26 Organisational Traits Compared to those Who Did and Did Not Find Location as an Important Consideration

	No		**Yes**	
	n	**% (out of 79)**	**n**	**% (out of 461)**
Reputation / status / rank of the University	20	25.32%	158	34.27%
High Salary	17	21.52%	155	33.62%
Performance / support / opportunity in research	28	35.44%	134	29.07%

Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	20	25.32%	133	28.85%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	18	22.78%	128	27.77%
Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors	26	32.91%	101	21.91%

For those who would consider inland regional university locations, the top 5 traits remained consistent.

Table 9-27 Organisational Traits Compared to those who Would and Would Not Consider Inland Regional Locations

Select the three most important factors regional universities could improve to enhance their attractiveness as an employer	**Would not consider Inland Regional**			
	NO		**YES**	
	n	**% (out of 286)**	**n**	**% (out of 254)**
Performance / support / opportunity in research	88	30.77%	74	29.13%
Reputation / status / rank of the University	82	28.67%	96	37.80%
Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors	82	28.67%	45	17.72%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	80	27.97%	66	25.98%
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	74	25.87%	79	31.10%

Similarly, no new traits appear in the top 5 most selected traits for those who would consider a coastal regional university.

Table 9-28 Organisational Traits Compared to those who Would and Would Not Consider Coastal Regional Locations

Select the three most important factors regional universities could improve to enhance their attractiveness as an employer	**Would not consider Coastal Regional**

	NO		YES	
	n	% (out of 447)	n	% (out of 93)
Reputation / status / rank of the University	142	31.77%	36	38.71%
High Salary	132	29.53%	40	43.01%
Performance / support / opportunity in research	131	29.31%	31	33.33%
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	130	29.08%	23	24.73%
Secure / permanent / tenured employment	120	26.85%	26	27.96%

Finally, responses were compared for those who did not know enough about any of the regional universities, those that would not consider any of the regional universities and those who would consider or prefer at least one of the regional universities. For those that would not consider any of the regional universities (n 50), the job including or allowing for a focus on research entered the top 5 most selected traits. Given that these respondents would not consider any regional university employer, and that it has not entered into the top 5 traits in any other analysis, it will not be included in the key organisational traits to enhance regional university employer attractiveness. For those who would consider or prefer at least one of the regional universities, the most commonly selected important trait was secure/permanent/tenured employment, followed by a friendly and positive culture.

Table 9-29 Organisational Traits Compared to Knowledge of Regional Universities

Select the three most important factors regional universities could improve to enhance their attractiveness as an employer	**Consideration of Regional Universities**					
	Do not know enough about any of the Regional Unis		**Would not consider any of the Regional Unis**		**Would consider or prefer at least one of the Regional Unis**	
	n	**% (out of 151)**	**n**	**% (out of 50)**	**n**	**% (out of 296)**

Secure / permanent / tenured employment	36	23.84%	8	16.00%	91	30.74%
Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors	29	19.21%	5	10.00%	86	29.05%
High Salary	53	35.10%	21	42.00%	82	27.70%
Reputation / status / rank of the University	53	35.10%	22	44.00%	81	27.36%
Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department	45	29.80%	20	40.00%	76	25.68%
Performance / support / opportunity in research	51	33.77%	16	32.00%	76	25.68%
Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development	22	14.57%	4	8.00%	73	24.66%
Job includes or allows for work/life balance	22	14.57%	5	10.00%	60	20.27%
Job includes or allows for a focus on research	27	17.88%	15	30.00%	51	17.23%

Analysis of these results presents some interesting findings, particularly in contrast with the top 5 traits when considering mean and top 5 traits when considering the top 3 most selected traits. High salary finds itself amongst the most selected traits that respondents believe that RUN universities would need to improve to be more attractive. High salary seems to operate as a compensatory trait to counteract the negatives associated with that type of university. It is not surprising that the reputation/status/rank of the university also presents as a key area of improvement to enhance the attractive of RUN institutions, given that these universities perform amongst the lowest in many ranking systems commonly used in the sector.

9.3 Segmentation

As with the analysis of results relating to the attractiveness of university schools of business and law generally, it is valuable for regional university schools of business and laws to determine segments that indicate interest in regional universities, so that employer branding can be

targeted towards these respondents, or particular traits desired by target segments, so the employer brand can be built around these traits. Through the analysis of responses, three key segments were discovered to add value to the possibilities of market segmentation:teaching versus research focus, experience in a regional area, and discipline. Gender was also analysed, but looking at only those who would consider working at a regional university or would prefer a regional university (i.e., "This is an employer of choice for me") - no significant relationship between gender and consideration of regional universities based on counts tested using Chi-square tests was identified. When using responses as a continuous measure – again, using Independent-groups t-tests, there were no significant differences between males and females.

9.3.1 Teaching versus Research Focus

An interesting analysis of the data revealed some variance in attitudes towards teaching and research. In the Likert scale rating of traits, 70 (12.96%) participants gave teaching **focus** a higher rating than research focus, 63 (11.67%) participants gave teaching **performance** a higher rating than research performance. While noting that respondents were not asked to directly compare teaching versus research focus, or teaching versus research performance, there is some evidence indicating people who gave teaching a higher rating than research held more favourable attitudes towards regional universities and locations. Differences (i.e., teaching focus importance rating subtract research focus importance rating; and teaching performance rating subtract research performance importance rating) were calculated, with a more positive score indicating higher rating for teaching than research.

Table 9-30 Impacts of Teaching and Research on Attitudes Towards Regional Universities and Locations

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teaching-Research Focus	Would NOT consider or prefer any regional university	244	-.7869	1.24212
	Would consider or prefer any regional university	296	-.3176	1.19625
Teaching-Research Performance	Would NOT consider or prefer any regional university	244	-.5574	.99007
	Would consider or prefer any regional university	296	-.2196	.95087

Independent Samples t-test showed that respondents who would consider or prefer any regional university rated teaching focus a higher importance than research focus, compared to those who would not consider or prefer any regional university ($t(538) = -4.46$, $p < .001$). A similar finding occurred for the teaching vs research performance rating ($t(538) = -4.03$, $p < .001$).

Table 9-31 Respondents Who Consider any Regional University and Preference for Teaching Focus

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Teaching-Research Focus	Equal variances assumed	2.433	.119	-4.459	538	.000	-.46932	.10525	-.67606	-.26257
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.443	510.709	.000	-.46932	.10563	-.67684	-.26179
Teaching-Research Performance	Equal variances assumed	2.199	.139	-4.032	538	.000	-.33778	.08377	-.50233	-.17323
	Equal variances not assumed			-4.017	510.096	.000	-.33778	.08409	-.50300	-.17257

9.3.2 Experience in a Regional Location

The consideration of regional universities was also examined in light of the respondents' previous experience living in a regional location. Bivariate correlations were used to examine the relationships between previous experience living in an inland regional town and a coastal regional town and consideration of working at regional universities. Results showed people who have lived longer in an inland regional town were more likely to consider working at a regional university overall ($r(536) = .11$, $p = .012$), in particular, Southern Cross University ($r(536) = .10$, $p = .026$), University of New England ($r(536) = .13$, $p = .002$), and University of Southern Queensland ($r(536) = .17$, $p < .001$). Results also showed people who have lived longer in a coastal regional town were

more likely to consider working at a regional university overall ($r(536) = .15$, $p = .001$), in particular, Southern Cross University ($r(536) = .17$, $p < .001$), University of New England ($r(536) = .13$, $p = .003$), University of Southern Queensland ($r(536) = .11$, $p = .014$), and University of Sunshine Coast ($r(536) = .16$, $p < .001$). These results offer a useful insight for RUN providers. The data indicates that respondents with exposure to a regional area are more likely to consider employment in these locations.

9.3.3 Discipline

Consideration of regional universities yielded some variance. Results from independent-groups t-tests showed:

- When scores were averaged across the 6 regional universities – those from other business disciplines were more likely to consider a regional university than those in Law.
- Those from other business disciplines were more likely to consider Central Queensland University and Federation University than those in Law.

These results may be the result of the presence of an independent law school, or the maturity or perceived quality of the law offerings, at either of Central Queensland University or Federation University.

The lower responses of law academics considering Central Queensland University may be because this university's law program is relatively new, and purely online. Meanwhile, those in the law discipline were unlikely to consider Federation University, which does not offer a law program. The fledgling law program at Central Queensland University and absence of a law program at Federation University may explain why academics from other disciplines were more likely to consider RUN institutions.

9.4 Summary

The adaptive theory, sequential mixed methods approach utilised in this thesis ultimately reveals nine key organisational attractiveness traits to enhance regional university employer attractiveness. Eight of the nine traits yielded high scores in the evaluation of means in the questionnaire, the selection of the 3 most important traits for organisational attractiveness, and

the 3 most important traits that regional universities need to improve. The exception to this is high salary, which seems to be introduced as a compensatory element to counter the negative perception of the RUN institutions as employers. The organisational traits identified through the questionnaire align with those elucidated through the qualitative phase of this thesis. The nine organisational traits are:

1. Job allows for work/life balance
2. Job allows for autonomy
3. Secure/permanent/tenured employment
4. Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development
5. Expert colleagues to learn from/work with
6. Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors
7. Performance / support / opportunity in research
8. Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department
9. Reputation / status / rank of the University
10. High Salary

The solution to the research question, 'What can Australian regional universities do to enhance their attractiveness to prospective and early career business academics?" lies in the development and employer branding of these employer traits.

As with the process followed in Chapter 8, given the value of differentiation in employer branding, and the importance of human capital in achieving strategic objectives, the respondents were segmented. The analysis in this chapter indicates that those who would consider or prefer employment at a RUN university were more likely to have a stronger interest in teaching. Along similar lines, the study suggests that regional universities would have greater success in attraction endeavours if they targeted those candidates with experience living in a regional location. Importantly, the analysis also reveals some variance in the traits deemed to be most important for each of the regional universities studied, allowing these universities to leverage these emphasised traits in their employer branding activities.

10.0 Discussion and Implications

The following sections discuss the analysis of the interview and questionnaire in context with other studies, findings and literature. The sequential exploratory sequential mixed methods used in this study have been designed to align within an adaptive theory approach, informed by comprehensive literature review and the researchers role as an insider. The contribution to the theoretical frameworks outlined in Chapters 8 and 9 indicates that this thesis has proposed a model of employer attractiveness that could be utilised by regional university schools of business and law to enhance employer attractiveness.

This discussion centres around four key areas of knowledge that this thesis has uncovered: the importance of location, university employer branding, the importance of job design, and the career growth drive for academics.

10.1 Location

Firstly, this research has validated the importance of location as a determinant of attractiveness of employment. Boswell, Roehling, LePine and Moynihan's (2003) found that location was a key determinant in acceptation and rejection decision making by job seekers. Location was matched only by the nature of the work in acceptance decisions (mentioned by 37.6% of participants), and was surpassed only by nature of the work (mentioned by 40.5% of participants) in rejection decisions. Turban, Eyring and Campion's (1993) survey of some 100 applicants for a petrochemical company did not find such an emphasis on location for acceptance of a position, but did find it to be the most significant consideration for rejection. In both studies, location was deemed to be a very important factor in organisational attractiveness, which is reflected in the findings of this study, where 461 of the 540 respondents (85.37 per cent) indicated that location was an important factor. The preference of potential employees to prefer metropolitan locations (as shown in the questionnaire results), aligns with the metrocentric thinking posed in Chapter 3 of this thesis, and supports the theory that regional universities indeed struggle to attract staff.

Given that the regional location of the university is immovable, it is in the interest of regional universities to consider alternative attractive traits that they can develop and build into their employer brand. Of course, it is plausible that regional universities also pursue strategies of

hosting metropolitan campuses which may counter concerns regarding location for staff, or investigate the prospect of a transient, fly in – fly out, cadre of staff.

In the interests of enhancing employer attractiveness, and considering the literature discussed in Chapter 5 of this thesis, employer branding is recommending as a mechanism and model to enhance employer attractiveness.

10.2 Employer Branding

Moroko and Uncles (2009) indicate that there are five key characteristics of a successful employer brand: brand awareness, employee value proposition, differentiation, psychological contract fulfilment and unintended appropriation of brand values. There are considerably gaps between these characteristics and the findings of the research in this thesis.

Firstly, with regard to brand awareness, the results of the questionnaire indicate that a large number of respondents do not know about one or more of the RUN institutions. This presents as an opportunity to develop and invest in a differentiated employer brand which offers a unique employee value proposition for potential candidates.

Secondly, the employee value proposition for universities has been explicitly addressed in this research. The principal research questions have been designed to elucidate the desired traits of prospective and early career academic staff. The determination of traits has undergone a rigorous process. Firstly, it was informed by literature review in the nature of the academic vocation in Australia, and existing studies in employer branding. The identification of traits was then explored through a series of in-depth semi-structured interviews with business and law academic staff and PhD students at Australia's regional universities. Finally, the traits were put to the wider group of prospective and early career academic staff in the form of a quantitative questionnaire. The result is a comprehensive set of well tested employer traits that are confirmed to contribute to the attractiveness of schools of business and law as employers. The traits ultimately constitute the employee value proposition.

The third consideration, differentiation has been discussed in Chapter 5 of this thesis, and it is particularly relevant given the apparent convergence and lack of diversification within the higher

education sector in Australia. The need for differentiation was also observed by respondents during the qualitative interviews (see Section 7.8 of this thesis). Moroko and Uncles (2009) suggested that employer branding may assist with labour market segmentation, and ultimately the targeted recruitment of those with person-organisation fit, the findings of this study indicate that the most important traits for those who would consider regional universities (albeit with some variance in order) is not unique. However, while there is argument that employer branding is paramount to attracting the best talent (Chambers, Foulon, Handfield-Jones, Hankin, and Michaels, 1998), we know that differentiation of employer brands among direct competitors is difficult (Barwise and Meehan, 2004), and is not found in practice (Backhaus, 2004). What is clear from Moroko and Uncles' (2009) research, is that employees are aware of employer brands that do not differentiate. Respondents to Moroko and Uncles (2009, p. 165) study indicated the negative responses to brands that were seen to be "soulless" or did not indicate a unique value proposition for joining. The Australian Higher Education Industrial Association (2016) study of the Australian Higher Education Workforce of the Future ratified the need for Australian universities to differentiate, however the system itself may force some degree of convergence given the funding mechanisms in place.

In terms of differentiation, unfortunately there is evidence of convergence of mission for Australian universities, which ultimately leads to decreased capacity to differentiate brand. For example, across the higher education sector in Australia, business and law schools are pursuing accreditation in global benchmarks such as AACSB, AMBA and EQUIIS. Indeed, as many schools of business and law pursue and are granted these accreditations, those who have not may be neglected by, or face criticism from, potential students, alumni or industry. Perhaps, when many of the countries business schools have achieved the sought-after 'triple crown' accreditation (AACSB, AMBA and EQUIIS), in the interests of competitive advantage, the next target will be CEMS or some other accreditation. In reality, many of the regional university schools of business and law do not yet have accreditation from local, and inherently less laborious and complex, accrediting bodies such as AHRI or AMI. If nothing else, the process of applying for and gaining accreditation from these professional associations would provide growth and professional development for those academics and professional staff who are involved. However, given that academic staff are already experiencing work overload, budget limitations, and the inherently

time consuming and costly process of applying for and gaining accreditations, even this remains a troublesome goal.

The research presented in chapter 5 of this thesis regarding psychological contract fulfilment emphasises that any employer branding activities must be approached with caution and authenticity, it is integral that the espoused employer brand reflects the reality. Accuracy of the employer brand is integral (Moroko and Uncles, 2009), lest breach of psychological contract is likely, which ultimately damages the employer brand, lead to staff dissatisfaction, stress, poor performance and problems with retention (Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski and Bravo, 2007; Suazo, Turnley and Mai, 2005; Raja, Johns and Ntalianis, 2004; Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly, 2003; R Bunderson, 2001; Turnley and Feldman, 1999; Robinson, 1996; Robinson and Rousseau, 1994).

Finally, Moroko and Uncles (2009) indicate that employer branding leads to unintended appropriation of brand values. This presents an important consideration in the design and implementation of employer branding, as individuals tend to appropriate other elements of a brand to the employer brand. For instance, potential employees may appropriate their interpretation or perception of an organisation's products or service to its characteristics as an employer brand (Moroko and Uncles, 2009). As such, employees may perceive that the programs offered at a particularly university are not of high quality, and extrapolate to mean that this university is not a high quality employer, either. Moroko and Uncles (2009) suggest that this occurs when information about the employer brand itself is not accessible. As such, it makes sense to promote the employer brand as intended. One such way to do this is through internal branding, as we know that word of mouth is a powerful informal marketing tool, and that indeed (as discovered during the interview process) academic staff do exchange information regarding their employer informally through networks.

The process for developing employer brand is not straightforward. In fact, Willock (2005), recognised that the vast majority of HRM professionals do not have the necessary skills and knowledge to develop and implement an employer brand. With this in mind, professional development in employer branding is integral for HRM professionals, leaders and managers in Australia's regional universities.

Considering the findings in this thesis, the unique employee value proposition for an Australian regional university school of business and law should focus on three key tenants which encompass all of the key traits identified in this study:

- Job design;
- Organisational culture and leadership; and
- The career growth aspiration of academics

10.3 Job Design

Many of the traits identified by respondents as core to organisational attractiveness relate to job design. If a regional university school of business and law is to enhance its attractiveness to potential staff, it is worthwhile to consider and enhance the job design practices therein. The importance of job design for academics is highlighted in the literature presented in Chapter 2 of this thesis, reflected in the research regarding job design in section 5.5.3, emerged as a concept of thematic importance in the qualitative interviews and ultimately yielded high results in the determination of the most important traits for employer attractiveness in the questionnaire. Key job design practices identified were work/life balance, autonomy, secure employment and salary.

Work/life balance was discussed extensively in the interview phase of this thesis, with respondents indicating that one of the attractions to regional university employment was the lifestyle, which was seen to be more relaxed, less busy and easier than living in a metropolitan area. Respondents, particularly in coastal locations, made mention of the beach and surfing, while many respondents in these regions and inland regional locations were fond of the scenery of their towns and nearby areas. In metropolitan areas, it may still include important lifestyle characteristics (such as access to multicultural communities, access to international airports, concerts, schooling, sporting and health facilities that were mentioned during the interviews). Work life balance, however, encompasses more than lifestyle choice, incorporating such things as time with family and friends, health and wellbeing. The questionnaire results ratified the importance placed in work/life balance by respondents both in the attraction of academic staff generally, and specifically to regional university schools of business and law.

A study outside of academia, by Thompson (2004) revealed that 68 per cent of respondents indicated that increasing work demands precluded their ability to maintain work/life balance.

Nonetheless, the benefits for the organisation were clear: staff turnover down 4.5 per cent, absenteeism down 3.5 per cent, and return from parental leave up 24 per cent (Thompson, 2004). Research by Fleetwood (2007) also revealed that work life balance initiatives to lead to increased productivity, improved recruitment and retention, lower rates of absenteeism, reduced overheads, improved customer experience, and a more motivated, satisfied and equitable workforce. Fujimoto et al (Fujimoto, Azmat and Hartel, p. 164) flag concerns about the gendered perception and use of work life balance programs, finding that "full-time working men continue to work excessive long hours" and that for women, "significantly narrower range of social activities outside their work" and "conditional flexible working hours arrangements further confirmed their restricted lifestyles". The 2017 National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) State of the Uni survey, which collected 15,384 responses from university staff across Australia, indicated that perceptions of work life balance at Australian universities may be improving. When it was last completed (in 2015), the study revealed that only 42.2 per cent of respondents felt that they could maintain a balance between work and other aspects, but this had increased to 47.7 per cent in 2017 (NTEU, 2018). In evaluating job satisfaction, work life balance was one of the most important factors for respondents (29.5 per cent, surpassed only by positive work relationships with colleagues at 49.4 per cent, exciting and interesting work environment at 44.0 per cent and opportunity to participate in education of young people at 42.0 per cent) (NTEU, 2018). However, in the study, only 32.7 per cent (compared with 62.7 per cent amongst professional/general staff) indicated a capacity to maintain work life balance. Academics indicated that they worked, on average, 52.6 hours per week, and 76.7 per cent felt that if they did not work the number of hours they did, their performance would not be considered satisfactorily (NTEU, 2018). In Shen's (2010) study of psychological contract fulfilment for academic staff, 280 respondents were surveyed, responding to a range of traits on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. In this study, a reasonable workload was valued very highly (n 265, mean 4.23, standard deviation 1.06), but respondents did not anticipate a modest workload (n 260, mean 2.82, standard deviation 1.33). Shen's study (referred to in other topics within this discussion) was conducted at only one university in Australia, and across all academic levels.

Evidently work/life balance programs are important, and they exist, but their uptake appears to be limited. The research regarding work life balance in Chapter 5 discusses the difference between structural and cultural components of work/life balance. The literature suggests that the uptake

of programs may be pinned down to the cultural components. As such, to increase the uptake of work/life balance initiatives, universities need to invest in cultural elements that enable their utilisation.

Autonomy is widely recognised and regarded as an important component of work. Section 5.5.3 discusses the importance of autonomy in further detail. In addition to this literature, in Shen's (2010) study, autonomy was another highly ranked trait (n 268, mean 4.17, standard deviation 0.95). In Deci and Ryan's (2000) self-determination theory, they propose that humans possess an innate need for autonomy (along with effectiveness and relatedness). Cerasoli, Nicklin, Nassrelgrgawi (2016), point out that, "The need for autonomy reflects the most basic desire humans possess to be the causal agents of their environment." However, managerial forms in higher education seem to have reduced academic autonomy (Fredman and Doughney, 2012; Locke, Cummings and Fisher, 2011). Dan Pink (2009) highlights autonomy, along with mastery and purpose as key drivers of workplace motivation. Autonomy has been shown to improve performance (Cerasoli, Nicklin and Nassrelgrgawi, 2016).

The implication of these factors is that regional universities should look to offer tenured, or tenure-track positions to suitably qualified and talented academic staff. The research in this thesis has revealed that regional universities suffer from an inability to attract staff, but that a tenured role is very valuable. Job security has been linked with enhanced performance and enhanced feelings of wellbeing, Reflecting the importance placed on secure/permanent/tenured employment in this research, a 2016 study by the revered Society for HRM revealed that job security is the most important factor for job satisfaction. Job security was flagged as one of the most important determinants of job satisfaction in the NTEU's State of the University 2017, selected by 31.1 per cent of respondents *up from 28.1 per cent in 2015) as a key source of job satisfaction. Unfortunately, according to the NTEU (2018, p. 2), "only 36 per cent of staff agreed with the sentiment that, "My job feels secure", and only 29.4 per cent were satisfied with management's performance in providing secure employment". In contrast, in Shen's (2010) study, job security yielded a mean of 3.90 (n 264, standard deviation 1.11). The comparatively lower mean for secure employment may be the result of their being greater mobility opportunities within the location of the university (which is unknown), or the more senior respondents to this study being less concerned about job security given their track record and experience compared with an early

career academic or current PhD student. Indeed, given the stressful nature of academic work reported by academics across Australia (Bentley et al, 2013), job security is particularly important. Job security has been seen to enhance performance in stressful workplaces (Lu, Du, Xu and Zhang, 2016).

The inclusion of salary in the list of traits that regional universities could improve to enhance attractiveness was surprising, particularly as the interviews with those based at RUN institutions had suggested that while there may be variance in salary, it was not a key driver or determinant. This aligned with the findings of Bathmaker (1999), who revealed that the lure of academia was certainly not in high income earning potential. While Lorange's (2006) suggestion that business schools at Australian universities should compensate their academic staff more generously is recognised for its credibility in the face of comparatively higher salaries in other industries, McInnes's 1999 study of 1500 academic staff at Australian universities revealed that the majority of academic staff are motivated by intrinsic interests, rather than extrinsic rewards, such as material or financial benefits. In an exploration of the most important factors in the academic psychological contract, Shen (2010) explored the importance of salary (pay). Aligned with the responses in the qualitative phase of this thesis, the comparatively low count of respondents who selected this trait as one of the top 3 in university attractiveness (n 88, 16.3 per cent of respondents), respondents in Shen's study made statements such as, "I knew I would not get high pay when I entered academia" (Shen, 2010, p. 579). Shen (2010, p.580) measured respondent interest in pay using three criteria: "1) pay me no less than I would get in a similar job in another university. 2) pay me no less than others doing similar work at this university; and 3) pay me on the basis of my performance.". The results indicated that the most important factor was "Pay me no less than others doing similar work" (n 268, mean 4.50, standard deviation 0.89), followed by "Pay me no less than I would get in a similar job in other universities" (n 268, mean 4.26, standard deviation 1.07), and lastly "Pay me based on my performance (n 263, mean 3.95, standard deviation 1.17) (Shen, 2010).

Above-average salary and compensation has been identified by employer branding specialists Ambler and Barrow (1996) and Berthon, Ewing and Hah (2005) as important economic drivers of employer attractiveness. But, the 2017 NTEU State of the Uni survey (NTEU, 2018) reveals competitive salary as the eighth mostly commonly selected important source of job satisfaction

among academic staff, with a yield of 21 per cent. Martin (2011) explains that the hedonic treadmill causes satisfaction to be limited despite the provision of external elements such as salary or rank, and as a result of adaptation, employees become accustomed to their current situation, so individual happiness or satisfaction is not sustained through the provision of higher salary or rank alone. While this is true, the sudden interest in salary as a compensatory mechanism to enhance regional university attractiveness is worthy of consideration (n 172, 31.85 per cent of respondents). High salary was often selected particularly for those who indicated that their child situation (n 40, 41.24 per cent) or partner situation (n 71, 43.03 per cent) would prevent their considering employment at a regional university. In light of economic data collected regarding the location of RUN institutions (see Chapter 3), it is conceivable that respondents believed that the employment prospects of their partner would be limited in the regional location, and thus their own salary would have to increase. Academic pay at Australia's universities is typically in line with the provisions of the enterprise agreement. Whilst each public university in Australia is covered by a separate Enterprise Agreements, they are all negotiated between the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU) and the university. If one university were to decide to increase salaries by a significant margin, this would likely open the door to salary increases in negotiations between other universities and their constituents. However, it may be viable for universities to consider paying particular staff above awards in line with the intention of supporting academic career growth aspirations (See section 10.5).

Chapter 2 of this thesis includes discussion of the typical factors in the composition of academic work in Australia. Coates and Goedegebuure (2012) suggest a recasting of the academic workforce, outlining eight possible strategies for action: reconfigure academic work, construct academic career profiles, design attractive customised experiences, design a measured experience, engage sessional academics, refresh the research degree, expand staff numbers with system growth, and, engage leaders in capacity development (Coates and Goedegebuure, 2012). The consideration and implementation of these recasting strategies may serve the regional university school of business well as they endeavour to differentiate a unique employer value proposition, and design an academic job that is attractive to prospective employees. The need to both redesign existing roles and design new roles has been echoed by the Australian Higher Education Industrial Association (2016).

Considering Coates and Goedegebuure's (2012) advice about recasting the academic workforce, perhaps it is worthwhile for RUN institutions to consider substantially and significantly different faculty positions. These may be challenging to introduce given the confines of Enterprise Agreements. Such different faculty positions may include the transient, fly in – fly out, cadre of staff discussed in Section 10.1; research focussed staff that are primarily based in metropolitan areas (either at home or a satellite campus); staff from other institutions seconded to the regional university for a period of time to foster partnerships (with compensation to both the academic and their institution); staff who share time between industry and academic work; or greater delineation and/or observance of the teaching, research and service parts of the academic roles common in the sector.

10.4 Organisational Culture and Leadership

The organisational culture trait featured prominently in the discovery of the most important traits employees value in attractiveness. In the questionnaire, respondents indicated a strong preference for a culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors, which reflected the findings of the interviews where respondents indicate a preference for leaders that are engaging, empowering, supportive and trustworthy.

The 2017 NTEU State of the Uni survey revealed that their most importance source of job satisfaction was "positive work relationships with colleagues". Unfortunately, only 27.6 per cent of respondents indicated confidence in senior management at their university, only 22.1 per cent were satisfied with the performance of senior management, only 15.2 per cent of respondents thought change was handled well, and only 24.3 per cent agreed that they were consulted regarding changes that affected them. Of the academic staff who participated in the study, only 30.7 per cent indicated that management treat staff with respect, and only 28.9 per cent felt that the workplace culture was satisfactory or very satisfactory.

In Edward Hess's (2014, p. 3) book, *Learn or Die: Using Science to Build a Leading-Edge Learning Organisation*, he suggests that, "organisations and individuals must either be continuously learning, adapting, and improving, or risk professional obsolescence". For Hess, a high-performance learning organisation is about having the right people, right environment and right processes. In discussing the right people, Hess (2014, p.32) explains the necessity of hiring and

developing people that "like to learn and who proactively seek to learn". Given the journey to academia and the nature of academic work (which is focussed on study, learning, research, and the production of knowledge) it is eminently probable that this criterion is met.
Hess (2014) describes the dichotomy of mastery goal-orientation and performance goal-orientation. Hess calls on research by Professor Carol Dweck of Stanford University, and her model of growth versus fixed mindsets. Dweck's research reveals that those with a mastery based approach to learning, driven by intrinsic motivation, are better learners who do not shy away from failure, new situations, uncertainty or negative feedback. Hess (2014) believes that a growth mindset can be developed, and when coupled with autonomy, and a sense of belonging to a team can lead to the establishment of a learning organisation. Importantly for Hess (2014), success was also dependent on establishing the right learning environment. This requires high employee engagement, and the creation of an internal learning system (Hess, 2014). The learning system "should consistently align the organisation's culture, structure, HR policies, leadership behaviours, measurements and reward to (1) enable and promote learning mindsets and behaviours and (2) engender a positive learning environment that supports a high level of emotional engagement that meets employees' needs for autonomy, effectiveness, growth and development, and relatedness. These needs are more likely to be met when individuals feel respected, trusted and cared for and feel that they can trust the organisation and its leaders." (Hess, 2014, p. 60).

Borrowing research by Hardiman (2012), Ambrose, Bridges, DiPetro, Lovett and Norman (2010) and Malcolm, Knowles, Elwood, Holton and Swanson (2005) regarding learning environments for students offers some insights into how a learning culture can be developed. Their research suggests that learners benefit from learner-centred, emotionally positive environments free from "stress, fear of failure, negative emotions, or ego defences" (Hess, 2014, p. 47) with opportunities for mastery, growth mindsets, where people are recognised as individuals and psychological safety is assured. Mastery is a key motivational driver, and is linked with the human desire to get better at doing something that matters (Pink, 2009). These imperatives align with those necessary for a culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches and mentors, meaning that it would be logical to apply a similar approach to those recommended for the student learning environment in the leadership and management of academic staff.

Hess's (2014) model of a high-performance learning organisation is also seen to meet the career growth aspirations discussed in the next section.

10.5 Career Growth Aspiration

Career growth aspiration was discussed at length during the interview phase of this research, and again appeared in numerous traits of major importance in the questionnaire. Ultimately this domain covers key traits of opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development, expert colleagues to learn from/work with, performance / support / opportunity in research, and reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department.

Shen's (2010) study of psychological contract fulfilment also revealed the importance of promotion, with the trait of 'fair promotion' listed as the fourth most important trait (n 264, mean 4.50, standard deviation 0.97) for psychological contract fulfilment for academic staff. Meanwhile, help with promotion yielded a lower result (n 263, mean 3.44, standard deviation 1.22), as did 'help me develop my career' (n 265, mean 3.81, standard deviation 1.03), which Shen (2010, p. 581) attributes to the reality that "promotion and advancement in universities are usually self-initiated". The 2017 NTEU State of the University (2018) reveals that only 25.8 per cent of academic staff felt that access to promotion and progression was satisfactory or very satisfactory.

Chapter 2 of this thesis includes an outline of the academic career and highlights the career aspirations of academic staff, which is believed to no longer fit with strategic imperatives and operational realities of the role. Meanwhile section 5.5.5 emphasised the value of career, development and growth generally, pointing out that investment in this area is lacking in Australia.

By implementing a high-performance learning organisation model, universities can meet the career growth aspiration needs of their academic staff. In addition to these, it may be worthwhile for regional Australian university schools of business and law to consider these strategies to foster research performance, and contribute to those traits relating to expert colleagues to learn from and work with, performance, support and opportunity in research and ultimately the reputation of the discipline, school, department and university:

- The appointment of transient fly-in fly-out or metropolitan based experts in research.

- The appointment of specialist experts in research on above award salaries.
- Recruiting semi-retired or older research leaders, perhaps to the aforementioned transient or above award position, or flexible roles, as retaining these employees in the workplace as long as possible as possible allows them to share their knowledge with newer employees (Sherman, Chiang-Hanisko and Koszalinski, 2013). Care would need to be taken to ensure that appointees remained keen to contribute and perform.

Integral to each of these options is that the focus for these appointments be on the mentoring, coaching and development of less experienced academic staff so as to contribute to the establishment and development of the high-performance learning organisation.

Universities should heed the importance placed on career growth and development emphasised in this study, particularly in the area of promotion. Feedback from respondents during the qualitative interview phase of this study revealed that academic staff would look to pursue promotion by switching universities, rather than enduring the onerous process of applying for internal grants. Respondents indicated that it was far easier to gain a higher level appointment at another university, rather than promotion within their own. In itself, this is at odds with the resource based view, that places great value in the attraction and retention of talented human capital. However, for regional universities it presents an additional problem, as promotion by switching employer would require shifting location (as there is only one university in each regional location). For those academics planning a career trajectory, this may act as a further deterrent to considering regional employment.

Given the findings of the questionnaire indicate that those with experience living in a regional area are significantly more likely to consider or prefer employment with a regional university, it is sensible for regional universities to endeavour to 'grow their own' talent. This means encouraging and fostering a culture conducive to the pursuit of academic careers, including excellent research higher degree student support and supervision. However, such a model would need to be managed with caution, as the approach may have similar disadvantages to internal recruitment, which can cause stagnation of ideas, maintenance of undesirable behaviours, prevent organisational culture shifts, deplete diversity, or result in employee 'cloning' (Nankervis, Baird, Coffey, Shields, 2017).

10.6 Summary

The findings of this study have contributed to the theoretical frameworks by confirmed that location plays a pivotal role in the determination of employer attractiveness, suggests that regional university schools of business and law are likely to struggle to attract talented human capital, and provided comprehensive solutions to the two principal research questions. Through an in-depth literature review, carefully designed and implemented sequential mixed methods research design utilising adaptive theory, this research has determined what are the desired employer traits of prospective and early career academic staff in schools of business and law, along with what regional university schools of business and law can enhance their attractiveness to prospective and early career business academics This discussion and implications chapter has provided insights into how the findings of this thesis could manifest in the formulation of unique employee value proposition for regional university schools of business and law as they invest in and develop their employer brand. The research indicates the value of differentiation, which is difficult for universities in a converging sector where policy, funding and indeed the interests of stakeholders appears to encourage convergence. The unique employee value proposition suggested involves a synergistic response which embeds the traits deemed to be most important in the study. Ultimately, Hess's (2014) vision of a high-performance learning organisation encompasses the importance of autonomy, career growth, and a culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behaviours like coaches and mentors, and as such as addresses many of the key traits. Ultimately, those traits pertaining to the reputation of the university, and of the discipline/school/department are not quick fixes, and will require time. The high-performance learning organisation is suggested as a vehicle to achieve these goals.

11.0 Limitations, Future Research and Conclusion

This thesis presents a consolidation of a comprehensive, systemic and detailed exploration of the plight of regional universities in Australia, the state of play for the vocation of academia in Australia, the emergence of employer branding as a mechanism to drive employer attractiveness.

In answering the principal research question, determining those traits which prospective and early career academics consider to be most attractive, and what regional university schools of business and law can do to enhance their attractiveness, this research has uncovered truths about the nature of academic work in Australia, and the plight of regional universities.

The nature of the research questions for this project indicated the need for a cross-sectional, correlational research design. As the study explored opinion of respondents, there is no scientific means to express if indeed the traits that they identified as being attractive would actually attract them to work for a particular employer. It would be interesting to survey respondents over a longitudinal period to see if the value they attach to particular traits has changed with their own maturity in the sector and/or changes within the sector.

Another limitation to this research lies in the limited yield of respondents to the questionnaire. The target confidence level of 95 per cent and margin of error of 5 per cent was not met for the different sub groups (early career academics and current PhD students) in the study. However, the full sample of 540 respondents to the questionnaire met targets when the estimated population and sample were combined. Given difficulties in capturing respondents, conducting a wider study with the endorsement, sponsorship and endorsement of the universities may yield more responses.

The principal focus of this research has been on regional business and law schools in Australia. It would be interesting to compare the findings of this study with other disciplines and/or in other countries. Particularly, it may be of interest to explore whether countries with more differentiated higher education sectors see a greater separation of attractive traits. It would be interesting to also examine the preparedness of overseas based academics to consider employment at Australian universities, particularly regional ones, and what would drive them to consider the regional universities.

Through analysis, it became apparent that a question that asked respondents, "Why would you not consider [university]?" would be valuable. This would allow the research to build on concepts of motivator and hygiene factors as discussed in Chapter 5.

Career, growth and development emerged as significant factors for university attraction in the questionnaire responses. Meanwhile, during the interview phase, the perception of internal promotion within universities as being an unnecessarily difficult process emerged. When viewed through the lens of strategic HRM and the resource based view (that suggest that the attraction, growth and retention of staff is strategically valuable to the organisation) these findings are perplexing. Further investigation of the perceptions and realities of academic promotion at Australian universities is warranted.

This thesis makes key contributions to the theoretical frameworks and university strategic HRM in four key ways:

- It confirms the importance of location in employer attractiveness.
- It provides evidence that regional universities suffer challenges in employer attractiveness.
- It reveals a model of employer attractiveness for early career academics and prospective academics in schools of business and law at Australia's universities.
- It discovers those employer traits which Australia's regional university schools of business and law at Australia's universities can leverage to enhance their attractiveness to prospective employees.

The model of employer attractiveness developed suggests that these organisational traits are most important for employer attractiveness:

1. Job allows for work/life balance
2. Job allows for autonomy
3. Secure/permanent/tenured employment
4. Opportunity provided for career growth, promotion and professional development
5. Expert colleagues to learn from/work with
6. Culture that is friendly and positive where leaders behave like coaches/mentors

7. Performance / support / opportunity in research
8. Reputation / status / rank of my discipline / school / department

The employer traits that regional universities must pursue is largely similar, but adds:

9. Reputation / status / rank of the University
10. High Salary

The Discussion and Implication chapter poses the implementation of employer branding to address concerns regarding employer attractiveness, the consideration and possible reconfiguration of job design, a focus on enhancing organisational culture and leadership, and the implementation of a process to enhance the realisation of career growth aspirations for academic staff. A high-performance learning organisation model is presented as a workable solution that integrates the key findings of this study into an implementable strategy for university HRM professionals, managers and leaders to enhancing the attractiveness of the university school of business and law.

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