The Success and Impact of Early Career Academics in Two New Zealand Tertiary Institutions

An Ako Aotearoa publication

Kathryn Sutherland
Victoria University of Wellington
Kathryn.Sutherland@vuw.ac.nz

Lesley Petersen
Queensland University of Technology
(formerly at Eastern Institute of Technology)
Lesley.Petersen@qut.edu.au

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Executive Summary

New Zealand lacks research on the success, retention, satisfaction, socialisation and influence of early career academics (ECAs). This project attempts to address this gap by considering the following: New Zealand ECAs' constructions of success; the influences on and barriers to success for ECAs in New Zealand tertiary institutions; and the potential impact that their success has on the students that they teach and supervise. This project uncovers the experiences of sixteen ECAs at two New Zealand tertiary institutions. We theorise that the concept of relational agency plays a key role in the success of ECAs, and we also identify several processes that contribute to the induction, preparation and meaningful socialisation of ECAs who will be capable of enhancing their students' educational outcomes and their own academic careers.

What is ECA Success?

The international literature makes a strong case for success in academia being primarily associated with research: specifically, research output, quality, productivity, and competitive grant funding. There is some mention of student ratings of teaching as an indicator of success, but the clear message from the literature is that successful ECAs are productive researchers, with strong, wide and well-established research networks, a growing reputation or profile in their discipline or community, and a solid record of winning competitive research grants. The literature also implies that successful ECAs are good "academic citizens" who are collegial with a strong sense of self-efficacy. Finally, successful academics themselves have indicated that they aspire to a holistic understanding of success that includes personal satisfaction and balance, alongside productivity and collegiality.

What Factors Influence ECA Success?

Success in academia depends on a trio of inter-related factors: institutional support, prior experience, and the personal characteristics of the academics themselves. A supportive Head of Department makes a very big difference to an ECA's chances of success, as do supportive colleagues and a culture of openness and mentoring. The experiences academics have in graduate school, industry and the workforce are important, too, and the mentoring provided by postgraduate supervisors is significant. As for personal characteristics, ECAs are knowledgeable and up-to-date on important new developments. They are also collaborative and have broad networks of support; resourceful in the ways that they seek support, help, advice and guidance; resilient in the face of setbacks and obstacles, rather than being defensive or risk-averse; organisationally aware, astute and committed, as well as collegial and caring (they are good "academic citizens") and; self-disciplined, and conscious of balancing work and home life.

What are the Barriers to ECA Success?

A lack of mentoring from senior colleagues, an apathetic Head of Department, poor or non-existent advice about promotion and career planning, and induction processes that lack specificity and timeliness are all barriers that ECAs identified to success. Also coming under fire were heavy workloads in the first couple of years, unsupportive colleagues, and an inability to balance home and work life.

Recommendations for new ECAs

We recommend that ECAs ask themselves a series of questions around the themes of resourcefulness, relationships, resilience, academic citizenship and balance, and we have produced a flyer to help prompt and guide this process.

Recommendations for Institutions

The role of the institution in supporting ECA success is very important, and we encourage Heads of Department, academic developers and others working with new ECAs to consider reviewing their processes and policies around the following:
- Promotion advice, feedback and support
- Regular feedback on performance in teaching, research and service
- Communication between management and academics
- Opportunities for networking and mentoring
- Equipment and funding for research and new teaching developments
- Opportunities to participate in decision-making processes.

Part One: Introduction

The success, retention, satisfaction and socialisation of early career academics (ECAs) have been well researched overseas, but New Zealand lacks such research. The body of international literature is also sparse on the potential impact that ECAs have on students. This project aims to move some way toward addressing these gaps in the New Zealand and international research by considering the following: New Zealand ECAs' constructions of success; the influences on and barriers to success for ECAs in New Zealand tertiary institutions; and the potential impact that their success has on the students that they teach and supervise. This project uncovers the experiences of sixteen ECAs at two New Zealand tertiary institutions. We theorise that the concept of relational agency plays a key role in the success of ECAs, and we also identify several institutional processes that contribute to the induction, preparation and meaningful socialisation of ECAs who will be capable of enhancing their students' educational outcomes and their own academic careers.

The project asked the following questions:
1. What is early career academic success?
2. Which factors make it more likely that new academics will or will not be successful?
3. What potential impact does ECA success have on students?

In asking these questions, we conducted a search of the international literature on ECAs and in Parts Two to Six of this report we offer a synthesis of this research. Each of these sections provides answers to the questions above, based first on what the literature tells us, and secondly on what the ECAs in our project told us. In Appendix One we also provide a summary table listing the key studies used to inform the interpretation of our data. It is summarised by country and includes each study's authors, participants, methods and, where known, the theoretical framework that informed the research.

1.1 Research Methods

This project was conducted at two different tertiary institutions, one a university and the other a polytechnic, that provided useful contrasts in size, type of institution, diversity of staff and students. We defined ECAs as being within ten years of having obtained a PhD or having been appointed to their first full-time, permanent, academic position. Our criteria for what constituted a successful ECA were drawn from a combination of criteria from earlier research studies on ECA success (Austin, Sorcinelli & McDaniels, 2007; Archer, 2008; Bazeley, 2003; Bland, Center, Finstead, Risbey, & Staples, 2006; Solem & Foote, 2004; Williamson & Cable, 2003). These included the following:
- received an institutional or national teaching award
- received an institutional or national research award
- earned a significant amount of external research funding
- received early promotion
- earned excellent evaluations of their teaching
- gained a high grade in any external or internal research or teaching performance scale or measurement
- any other criterion by which success might be defined at the institution.

Participants had to meet at least one, preferably more, of these criteria. The authors searched the institutions' personnel data to identify potential participants, then emailed a purposive sample of eligible academics from a variety of faculties. Eight academics from each institution were interviewed, giving a total sample size of 16. The table in Appendix Two summarises the participants' profiles. All names are pseudonyms and participants' disciplinary affiliations have been subsumed under generic faculty headings to protect their individual identities.

Two key methods were employed to gather a range of data on ECA experience, productivity and opinions. First, participants were interviewed by a researcher (either one of the principal investigators or a research assistant) who was not from their institution. Before conducting about half of the polytechnic and university interviews, the research assistant sat in on two polytechnic interviews with the university researcher, to ensure a consistency of interview style and approach across both institutions. Interviews were digitally recorded and semi-structured (the questions are available in Appendix Three) and the interviewers also took extensive notes.

A few months after the interviews were conducted, participants were invited to fill out an online questionnaire. The questionnaire was based on a thorough reading of the literature on ECA success,

productivity and satisfaction, and collected a range of information on demographic characteristics, and research and teaching activities. The bulk of the questionnaire, however, consisted of a series of statements about institutional support and personal experience, which participants were asked to respond to on a four-point Likert scale. Fourteen of the sixteen interviewees responded to the questionnaire, producing a response rate of 88% (one interviewee from each institution did not provide a response).

1.2 Data Analysis

Each interview was transcribed professionally, then checked against the recorded version for accuracy. Transcripts were sent back to participants for checking along with the invitation to participate in the online questionnaire. This checking process served two purposes: to validate the accuracy of the data collected, and to remind participants of their comments during the interview process, prior to their completing the questionnaire.

Both researchers analysed each transcript for common themes, and agreed upon a series of key themes, including constructions of and influences on success, contributors and barriers to success, and ECAs' impact on students. We then re-examined each transcript and coded participants' responses according to these themes. We calculated how many interviewees made responses under each theme and then summarised these data by rank (highest number of interviewees mentioning each theme); these data are presented graphically or in tables throughout the report. The other data analysis that occurred was of the questionnaire responses. Most items on the questionnaire asked participants to provide a response on a four-point Likert scale. The scales varied according to the question and asked for participants' agreement (ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree), their sense of how effective a particular item was (Very Effective – Very Ineffective) or how important something was (Very Important – Very Unimportant). We calculated means for these responses and present these in tables throughout the report, ranking responses from highest to lowest.

The following sections of the report summarise the key findings from our literature search and synthesis, and from our interviews and questionnaire research. First, we *define ECA success* from the perspective of the international literature (see Appendix One for a summary of the key studies we used in this synthesis), and then from the perspective of the ECAs in our project. Secondly, we look at what the literature and our ECAs say about the *factors that influence and the barriers that inhibit ECA success*. Finally, we consider the *potential influence of successful ECAs on students*.

Part Two: A summary of international definitions of ECA success

In lieu of a traditional literature review, we preface each section of our findings with a summary of the literature. The following section considers what the international literature says about ECA success – its definitions, parameters and shared understandings. This literature points to success in academia being generally understood as falling into three distinct but interrelated areas:

1. research success
2. collegiality or academic citizenship
3. personal satisfaction and balance.

2.1 Research Success

While success is arguably a personal construct (Ketteridge, Marshall & Fry, 2002), the literature on academic staff retention, satisfaction, and productivity, and on early career academics in particular, makes a strong case for success in academia being primarily associated with research: specifically, research output (Gingras, Lariviere, Macaluso, & Robitaille, 2008), research quality (Nir & Zilberstein-Levy, 2006), research productivity (Cinlar & Dowse, 2008) and competitive grant funding (Bazeley, 2003). An example of this singular focus on the research aspects of academic life can be found in Gray and Drew's 2008 handbook for new and aspiring faculty in the United States, *What they didn't tell you in graduate school.* In their list of six key basic concepts for succeeding in academic life, Gray and Drew focus exclusively on the research aspects of the academic career. Their six hints relate to, in order, the number of papers required for tenure, getting to know the most influential people in the discipline, identifying those people, publishing a paper, mentoring, and specialisation. These hints are directed primarily at aspiring *university* academics; success in institutions of technology and polytechnics (ITPs), especially in New Zealand, is more closely aligned with a lecturer's perceived effectiveness as a teacher (Gilbert & Cameron, 2002). However, even in New Zealand ITPs, success in research is becoming more desirable in a national tertiary environment where research funding is now performance-based (Çinlar & Dowse, 2008).

Some of the international literature mentions student ratings of ECAs' teaching as an indicator of success (Boice, 1991; Fairweather, 2002; Solem & Foote, 2004), but the majority of studies and handbooks focus on success in research and the building of a strong research profile (Jawitz, 2009) as the ultimate goal for academics:

> US: Research productivity is your prime form of portable wealth (Gray & Drew, 2008 p. 39)

> UK: There is a high correlation for the new lecturers' role as being engaged in research, publishing and establishing credibility in their designated field of knowledge... Conversely, there is a low correlation for a new lecturer's role in developing teaching strategies and determining an emphasis on teaching (Nicholls, 2005, p. 619).

> Israel: Although their role duties encompass a relatively large variety of tasks, they are judged mainly according to the research they conduct and their publications (Nir & Zilberstein-Levy, 2006, p. 542).

> NZ: With respect to promotion, all of the University staff said that research output was crucial, both in terms of quality and quantity. Most said that adequate teaching quality was seen as a basic "competency" but that being an excellent teacher would not, in and of itself, be regarded as sufficient basis for promotion (Gilbert & Cameron, 2002, p. 89).

Securing large amounts of competitive grant funding is also an indicator of academic success (Bazeley, 2003) as is promotion through the ranks from lecturer to professor (in Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom) and achieving tenure (in North America) (Hitchcock, Bland, Hekelman, & Blumenthal, 1995). Arguably, neither grant success nor promotion and tenure are achievable without first having established a profile within one's discipline, scientific community, or profession (Baruch & Hall, 2004; Grant, 2006; Gray & Drew, 2008; Hitchcock, et al, 1995; Laudel & Gläser, 2008; Nicholls, 2005; Nir & Zilberstein-Levy, 2006). Laudel and Gläser (2008) argue that ECAs' success in research depends on a transition from dependent to independent researcher that takes place in the social context of the scientific community, not just the organisational context of the department or institution:

> In the case of research work, the scientific community is the source of tasks and standards of conduct as well as the target of contributions, i.e., it fulfils all the main functions of the work organisation except for providing salaries and resources for the work (p. 389).

Gray and Drew (2008, p. 7) are even more explicit, listing the following as Hint #2 of 199 hints, for new academics in the US:

> Most academic fields are dominated by fewer than 100 powerful people. These people know one another and determine the course of the field. Early in your career you should get to know as many of them as possible. More to the point, they should know who you are.

Clearly, being known in the discipline is a sign of academic success. Being known within the institution is also important. In New Zealand, Adams (2008) has argued that "many TEO staff have a foothold in two camps: the academic discipline within the institution and a professional discipline outside it. Their community, or network, crosses this boundary and their status and career development depends upon playing an effective role in both aspects" (p. 50). The clear message from the literature is that successful ECAs are productive researchers, with strong, wide and well-established research networks, a growing reputation or profile in their discipline or community, and a solid record of winning competitive research grants.

2.2 Collegiality and Academic Citizenship

The literature also implies that successful ECAs are what might be termed good "academic citizens" (Macfarlane, 2007). Bruce Macfarlane, a UK Professor of Education, wrote *The academic citizen: The virtue of service in university life* (2007) as a companion to his 2004 book, *Teaching with integrity: The ethics of higher education practice*. He argues that service is the forgotten dimension in the triangle of academic life (the other two dimensions being teaching and research):

> commitment to service is about being an 'academic citizen.' This is someone prepared to contribute positively as a member of a series of overlapping communities both within and outside the university, to take responsibility for the welfare and development of students, colleagues and fellow professionals and to contribute to the life of the institution through decision-making processes (Macfarlane, 2007, p. 3).

Other researchers refer to this behaviour as 'collegiality' (Ambrose, et al, 2005; Solem & Foote, 2004; Toth, 1997), 'administrative attentiveness' (Jones, 2007) or 'intersubjectivity' (Trowler & Knight, 2000) and argue that the presence or lack of collegiality within a new academic's department can have a direct impact on their decision to stay at or leave their new university. In Ambrose et al's (2005) survey of 123 academics at a research-intensive university in the US, collegiality was "by far the single most frequently cited issue by both former and current faculty" (p. 814). They go on to argue that it is important to pay attention to *dis*satisfied academics who stay in the institution because they often withdraw from or taint collegial activity in their departments, thus potentially affecting the retention of new academics.

New academics will not stay, and go on to be successful, without the support of their departmental colleagues, or without an operational, social and political understanding of their working environment – both their departmental environment and the wider institution (Staniforth & Harland, 2006). Indeed, the research suggests that such collegiality and understanding are actually marks of success. Successful ECAs are those who have worked out how to "play the game" (Archer, 2008; Jawitz, 2009). In an article which draws on Bourdieu's social practice theory, Jawitz (2009) describes the departments he was studying as "fields" and his research participants (31 academics in three different departments at a South African university) as each carrying an individual *habitus* "which is 'all at once a "craft", a collection of techniques, references, a set of beliefs' (Bourdieu, 1993, pp. 72-3), formed out of past experiences and socialisation processes" (Jawitz, 2009, p. 602). Jawitz argues that the academic's individual *habitus* must eventually align with, subsume, or be assimilated by the field's collective *habitus* – the community (or department's) shared repertoire and ways of doing things. Such harmonisation cannot occur without the ECA first having attempted to understand the machinations, politics and commonly held assumptions operating within the department. As Trowler and Knight (2000) phrase it:

> The task facing the [new academic appointees] entering an established activity system is to become engaged with the common sets of understanding and assumptions held collectively in the community of practice; that is, to establish intersubjectivity (p. 31).

Having developed such intersubjectivity the new academic may then be able to establish "legitimacy among experienced colleagues" by brokering or negotiating new meaning into their departmental communities (Warhurst, 2008, p. 461).

Of course, there are dangers or risks associated with a focus on the department as the influential activity system (Engeström, 1990) or community of practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991) for new academics, including the following:

- The new academic may encounter resistance to innovation or change (Jawitz, 2009; Warhurst, 2008)
- The department or field's dominant versions of authenticity and success may be unrelated to or even run counter to the new academic's personal construction of authenticity and success (Archer, 2008)
- A dysfunctional department, lacking in collegiality, may send conflicting messages to new academics about what is valued, important and crucial to success (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 1998; Solem & Foote, 2004; Warhurst, 2008).

As Grant (2006) argues, "Anyone can float upwards on a rising tide, but you need to be aware of obstacles and risks that may impede or halt your progress" (p. 186). Such risks emphasise that successful academics are those who have developed a strong sense of self-efficacy (Boice, 1996) or individual agency (Billett, Smith, & Barker, 2005; Trowler & Knight, 2000; Warhurst, 2008) while simultaneously recognising the importance of relationships (Archer, 2008; Hitchcock, et al, 1995; Trowler & Knight, 2000).

2.3 Personal Satisfaction and Balance

The importance of relationships in the workplace leads to the third area in which the literature identifies success: personal satisfaction and balance. While the majority of the literature indicates that research accomplishments are the primary indicator of success, and that being a good academic citizen (working well with colleagues, devoting time and energy to the institution and to students, and building influential and useful institutional and disciplinary networks) is a useful accompaniment to research success, an ECA's sense of personal satisfaction and balance is very significant. Without personal satisfaction, an academic is, arguably, merely productive.

Several of the handbooks for new academics contain chapters devoted to work-life balance, time management or keeping healthy (for example, see Gray & Drew, 2008 and Toth, 1997). And, much of the research literature on faculty satisfaction emphasises the importance of being able to balance workload with family life and to gain a sense of personal satisfaction from teaching and research. Academic success, it is argued, is about self-fulfilment (Archer, 2008), enjoyment (Lucas & Murry, 2002), autonomy (Archer, 2008; Baruch & Hall, 2004; Laudel & Gläser, 2008; Warhurst, 2008) and security (Bazeley, 2003). As Archer (2008), in her study of new academics in UK universities writes:

> None of the younger academics defined success in careerist or instrumental terms (e.g. they did not name success in terms of achieving particular positions or accolades). Rather, they alluded to notions of 'self-fulfilment' through their work (p. 397).

A combination of satisfaction, productivity and collegiality offers an holistic understanding of success in academia that resonates strongly with what our research participants talked about when asked, "What is success?"

Part Three: New Zealand ECAs' Conceptions of Success

The following tables summarise the key definitions of success derived from the in-depth interviews with the 16 academics at the university (*n* = 8) and the polytechnic (*n* = 8) involved in this pilot study. The tables summarise interviewees' responses to the following two questions:

1. Why do you think you were nominated for this interview (ie, why are you considered a successful early career academic?)
2. What does success mean to you, *personally,* in terms of your academic career?

Individual transcripts were coded thematically and 23 indicators of success were generated (items in the tables were included only if at least two or more interviewees mentioned them). These items were then clustered into four thematic areas (the first three aligned with the literature findings, and we added a fourth, "Teaching").

It is very important to note that these tables represent *indicators* of success, that is, the factors that participants identified as *defining* success. For example, while the tables show that polytechnic academics identify "Demonstrating care for students" as an indicator that an academic is a successful teacher, the absence of university academics identifying this as an indicator of success does not mean that the university academics feel that it is not important, just that it does not *define* success.
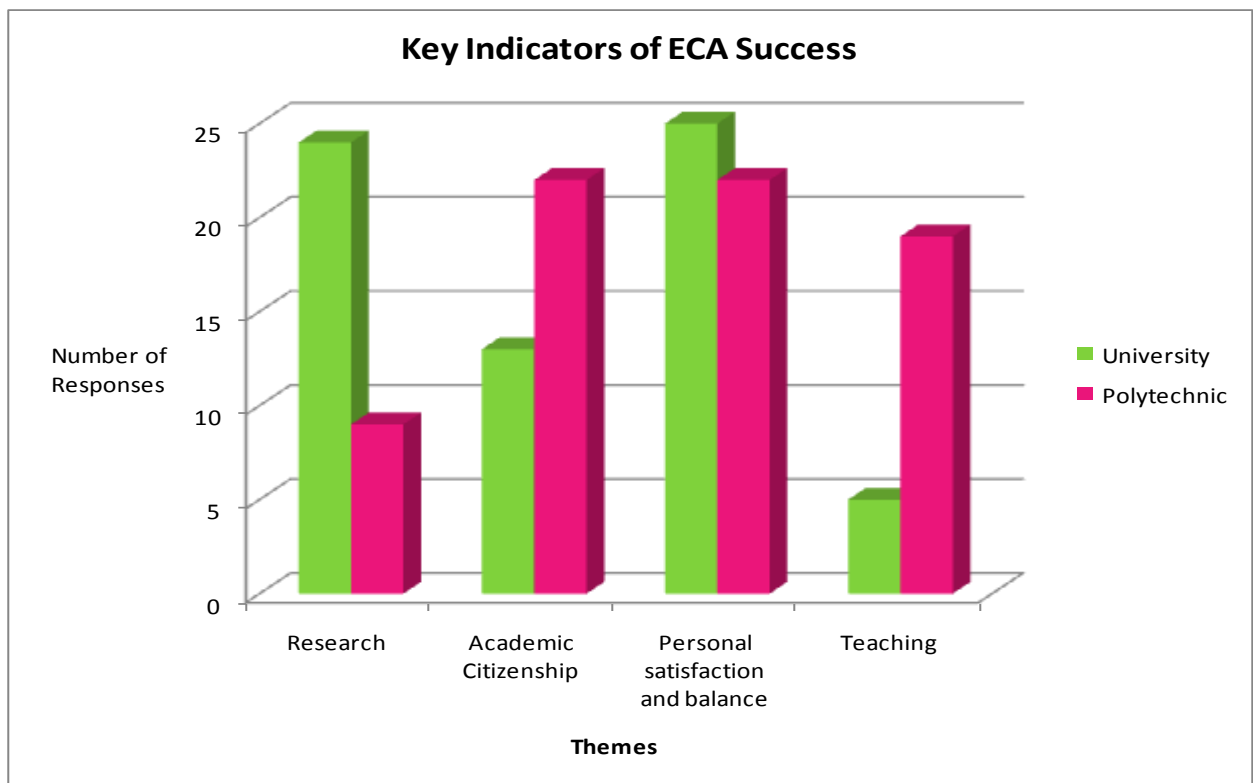
Figure One: Key Indicators of ECA Success

As Figure One shows, academics at the university value personal satisfaction and balance, as well as research, as key indicators of success in academia. Polytechnic academics also rank personal satisfaction and balance highly, but place teaching above research. The theme of personal satisfaction and balance includes such indicators as passion and enjoyment for the job, work-life balance and getting promoted, while research includes disciplinary reputation, research grants and outputs, and winning research awards. Teaching covers such indicators as seeing students succeed, developing a reputable programme, or being asked to become involved in teaching elsewhere. The intricacies of each of these themes are outlined in more detail in Table One in Appendix Five where the individual indicators are presented for each theme. The next two graphs show the top five of these individual indicators for both the university and the polytechnic respondents.

Top Five Indicators of ECA Success - University

Having good social and communication skills

Having a good reputation within the research...

Gaining research awards/big research grants

Getting promoted

Producing high quality, international research...

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

% of University Respondents
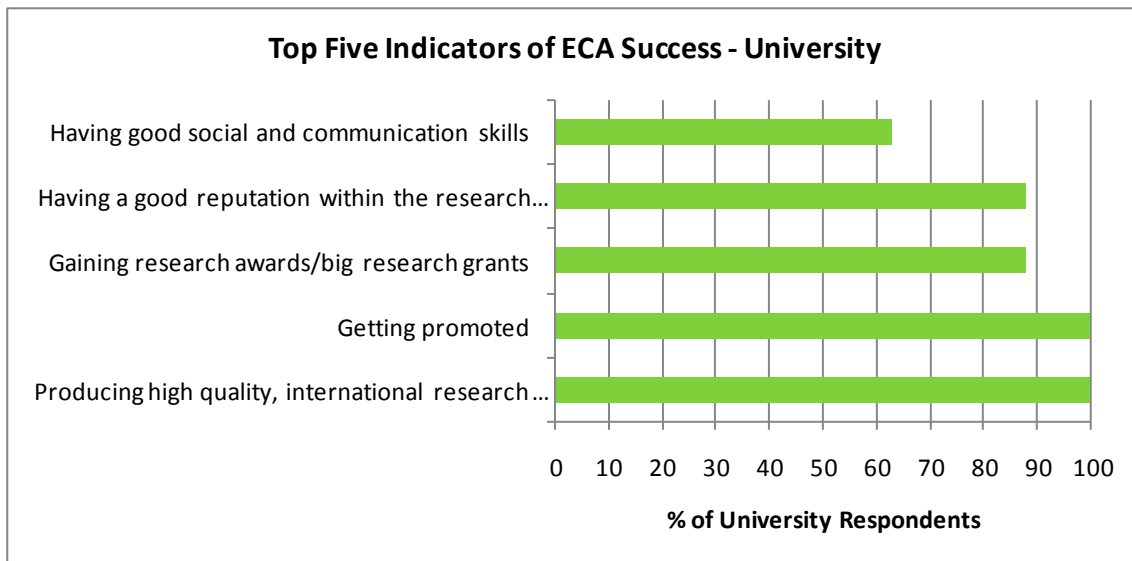
Figure Two: Top Five Indicators of Success - University

Clearly, as demonstrated in Figure Two, research outputs and getting promoted are the key indicators of success for university academics – all interviewees from the university mentioned these two factors as examples of what it means to be successful in the university environment. Research outputs and promotion are closely followed by winning competitive research grants or awards, and having a good reputation within the discipline (88% of interviewees mentioned these two indicators). Thirdly, 75% of the university academics in this study identified good social and communication skills as success indicators. This corresponds closely with the literature on ECA success.

By contrast, academics in the polytechnic talked much more about passion or enjoyment for the job (88% of polytechnic interviewees), followed by positive feedback from colleagues/manager, and good relationships with staff and students (75% each). In third place, with 50% of the polytechnic academics mentioning these factors, are student success and work-life balance (see Figure Three below).

Top Five Indicators of ECA Success - Polytechnic

Seeing students get positive results/succeed

Work-life balance

Maintaining good relationships with staff & students

Getting good feedback from colleagues/manager

Having passion for and enjoyment of the job

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

% of Polytechnic Respondents

Figure Three: Top Five Indicators of Success – Polytechnic

Success in teaching is valued more highly in the polytechnic than at the university. For example, when asked in interviews why they thought they had been nominated to be interviewed as a "successful early career academic", polytechnic academics' responses were along the lines of the following:
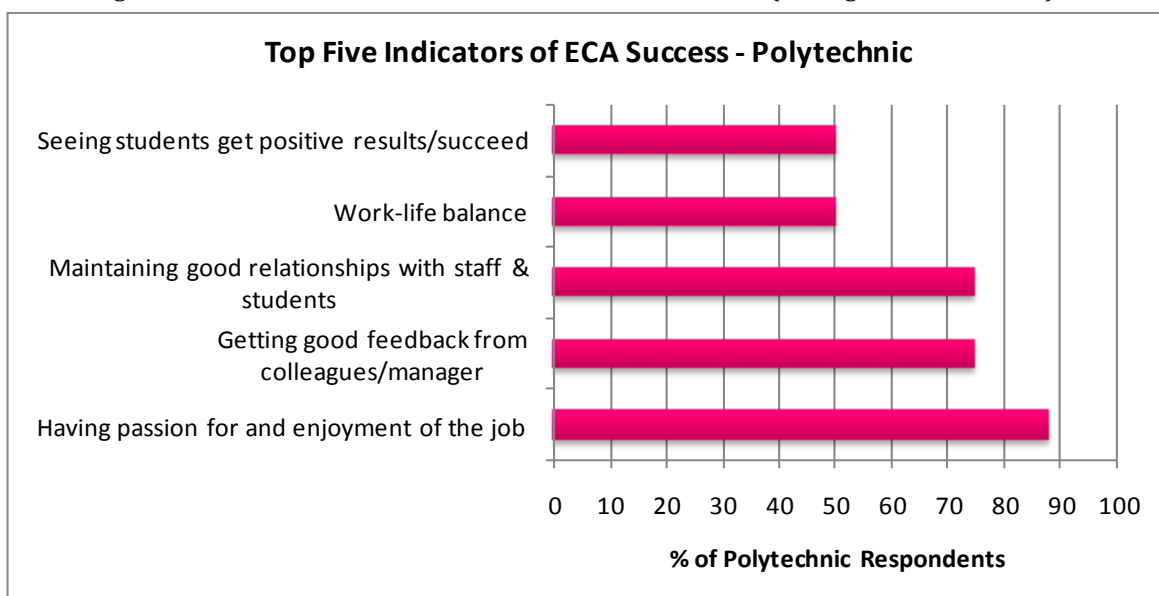
- I have developed a programme…which is innovative (Lily, Polytechnic, Education)

- Probably because the institution measures success in terms of student satisfaction and I've had consistently very high student satisfaction (Suz, Polytechnic, Social Sciences)

- Because we've got a good programme. It was new when I came on board, and we had a very good review by the registration board last year, so I think that's probably part of it – that I'm in a programme that I have some leadership in and I guess it's been successful (Janet, Polytechnic, Social Sciences)

By contrast, the university academics provided the following kinds of responses, which focus much more on research:

- I've been here for four years and I'm a senior lecturer. I got a Marsden Fast Start Award…and I think I'm pretty productive in terms of my research outputs…I love what I do and I love teaching, but I became an academic rather than a secondary school teacher because I wanted to write and publish (Dean, University, Humanities)

- Probably because I publish a lot... and I've just received a Marsden Fast Start grant (Teresa, University, Social Sciences)

- I've got grants. I've published papers and established a good sized research group (William, University, Science)

These responses are not surprising given that universities are more involved in research than polytechnics. Furthermore, all the university academics interviewed for this project were expected to participate in the Performance Based Research Fund (PBRF) process, whereas only two of the polytechnic academics indicated that they had been involved in PBRF. However, very few of the respondents had a singular focus on research alone as the key indicator of success. Indeed, arguably the most successful academic in our sample – a woman who was promoted to Associate Professor within seven years of starting as an academic – described a very rounded understanding of what led to her success in academia:

- I obtained two Marsden grants as principal investigator [when] I was a new academic. And that was at the time when there were no such things as Fast Starts; you just competed with everybody. So that was kind of a bit unusual. When I started, I didn't like teaching (laughs). I'm not sure I still like teaching actually. I'm very uncomfortable being in front of an audience. I guess maybe because I felt so uncomfortable in that sort of environment, I worked very hard at trying to not be uncomfortable and, as a consequence, my evaluations became very good. So my teaching became very good and quite early on, I became very proactive in the university environment. Quite quickly in my career, I became keen on participating more broadly in both the local environment that I was in, in the university environment, and then I guess my disciplinary environment across New Zealand. (Heather, University, Science)

Heather describes her success as coming from external grant recognition, the development of teaching, and involvement in her university and disciplinary communities. Similarly, Figure One shows, in line with the literature, that New Zealand ECAs regard success holistically as incorporating research, academic citizenship and personal satisfaction/balance. Additionally, teaching is an important indicator of success for New Zealand ECAs, though less significant than research and personal satisfaction (fewer than half of all respondents mention teaching-related dimensions as indicators of success).

Interestingly, each time a "careerist" notion of success makes a top ranking, it is tempered by a personal notion of success. For example, success at producing research outputs is first equal overall (69%) with passion and enjoyment for the job. Similarly, getting good feedback from colleagues is as important as winning an external grant, and maintaining a good work-life balance is as important as having a good reputation in the discipline (see Table Two in Appendix Five). When interviewees were asked what success meant to them *personally*, in terms of their academic career, this is where the responses about personal satisfaction and balance really emerged. And such responses were fairly evenly distributed across both university and polytechnic academics:

- I value success as a teacher as much as my success as a researcher although I seem to get more credit for what I do outside the classroom than what I do inside the classroom (Michelle, University, Law)

- I don't want to be a martyr to the cause kind of thing, so there has got to be something in it for me, in terms of my own growth and development and learning (Suz, Polytechnic, Social Sciences)

- Getting the quality of publication, quality of teaching, but doing that all within a suitable timeframe, so in other words, not doing the seven days a week thing (Peter, Polytechnic, Science)

- Doing a fulfilling job, doing something well, getting some recognition for what I like doing (Ingrid, Polytechnic, Arts)
- I'm very motivated and driven and I'm passionate about my research and I really hope, with my research, that I'll make a difference to society and humanity (William, University, Science)

Clearly New Zealand ECAs have a realistic understanding of what constitutes success in academia – research productivity guarantees promotion in the university system, and student ratings count towards assessment of teaching quality in the polytechnics – but this realism is balanced by a hopeful desire to act and think more holistically about success in their own careers. Most respondents are determined to enjoy their jobs, and claim to do so (when asked at the end of the online survey whether they enjoyed the challenge of their jobs, all agreed that they did.) They also conceive of success in relational, not just instrumental terms, desiring to be seen as helpful, collegial academic citizens, as well as having a high profile in the discipline or community. These last two indicators of success can also be re-cast as *contributors* to success.

The next section considers the kinds of factors that contribute to or impede an ECA's potential success. It addresses the findings from the literature first, then summarises what the participants from this research project identified as contributors or barriers to success.

Part Four: A Summary of the Literature on Factors Influencing ECA Success

There is considerable agreement in the literature, in both hemispheres, on what contributes to ECA success. These factors can be grouped thematically under the following headings:
- personal characteristics of successful ECAs;
- institutional contributions to ECA success; and
- influence of prior experiences on ECA success.

All three are crucial to success and cannot be separated from the other two; it is unlikely that an academic will be successful on the strength of personality alone, nor is having all the right institutional conditions in place a guarantee of success.

4.1 Personal characteristics of successful ECAs

Successful ECAs share some common traits, according to the literature. They are proactive in seeking support, help, advice and guidance (Austin, Sorcinelli & McDaniels, 2007; Warhurst, 2008); they do not wait for the institution or their colleagues to provide support, but actively and continuously seek it. They demonstrate resilience in the face of setbacks, rejections or obstacles (Bazeley, 2003; Boice 1996) rather than acting defensively or simply not taking risks. At the same time, they are not perfectionists and they do not over-prepare (Bazeley, 2003; Boice 1991). But, they are knowledgeable and remain up-to-date on important new developments in their disciplines (Bland et al, 2006; Gray & Drew, 2008).

In taking risks and keeping on top of the ever-expanding body of disciplinary knowledge, successful ECAs must carefully monitor the way they spend their time. The literature suggests that successful ECAs are self-disciplined, and conscious of (if not *always* successful at) balancing work and home life (Bazeley, 2003; Boice 1991; Laudel & Gläser, 2008). Such balance is also evident in the way that successful ECAs manage the different commitments expected of them within their institution and discipline or profession. In balancing these commitments, successful ECAs are organisationally aware (Blaxter, Hughes & Tight, 1998), astute (Bauder, 2006; Trowler & Knight, 1999) and committed (Cawyer, Simonds & Davis, 2002; Reybold, 2003). They are also collegial (Boice, 1996; Gray & Drew, 2008; Macfarlane, 2007) and caring (Jenkins & Speck, 2007). They are, as Macfarlane (2007) declares, good academic citizens. Macfarlane identifies academic citizenship as:

> engaging as a member of a community, or a series of overlapping communities. [That] membership…also implies obligations or duties or kinship in reciprocation of the benefits which membership brings…Others also expressed the view that academic citizenship implied broader obligations in connecting their work with the concerns of society (2007, p. 114).

In recognising the reciprocity inherent in academic citizenship, successful ECAs are thus also reliant on solid support networks (both self-constructed and organisationally or departmentally provided).

Perhaps the most conclusive finding in the literature on ECAs is that successful ECAs are collaborative and have broad networks of support, from departmental colleagues to external mentors, to family and friends, to former PhD supervisors. In a comprehensive review of the literature, Hitchcock et al (1995) report on 47 studies on faculty networks, productivity and success. They found that the preponderance of research demonstrates:
- successful academics frequently consult colleagues
- frequency of contact and number of contacts are greater for successful academics
- mentor-protégé relationships positively influence ECAs.

Successful academics regularly attend academic conferences (Nir & Zilberstein-Levy, 2006) and seek mentors and supportive colleagues within the department (Ambrose, et al, 2005), beyond the department (Cawyer, et al, 2002), and beyond the university (Bland, Weber-Main, Lund & Finstad, 2005):

> Mentored protégés compared with unmentored faculty newcomers, it is claimed by some researchers, do tend to feel more self-assured about professional risk-taking, exhibit greater political savvy, profess to feel more confident about their teaching, and, generally, in the long run tend to be more productive, to receive more competitive grants, to publish more, and they indicated higher career and job satisfaction, while achieving greater long term success than those not mentored (Lucas & Murry, 2002, p. 24).

Some researchers refer to this kind of active involvement in the discipline or community as "networking" and stress its crucial importance for learning how to be successful, and maintaining a high profile. For

example, Blaxter, et al's (1998) *Academic Career Handbook* (designed for academics in or entering the British higher education system) devotes an entire chapter to "Networking" before even touching on teaching or research. Likewise, Bland et al (2005) in the US, show that "Research productive faculty members have frequent, substantive (i.e., not merely social) conversations with research peers located inside and outside of their institution" (p. 96) and a "vital network of colleagues is so important that it is consistently found to be a major predictor of research productivity" (p. 97). Solem and Foote (2004) in their study of early career geography academics in the US similarly report that networking among departmental and university colleagues and within the wider discipline reduced feelings of isolation and improved performance. Bland et al (2005) also claim that "high scholarly productivity is…correlated with high levels of collaboration" (p. 81), while Bazeley (2003) in a study of early career researchers in Australia emphasises that "experienced researchers noted the importance of becoming known to potential reviewers and assessors. Networks were seen to open up employment and research opportunities as well as providing a stimulating source of critical discussion of one's ideas" (pp. 265-266).

As for teaching, Hitchcock et al (1995) report that an academic "with an able network is also at an advantage so far as teaching is concerned" (p. 1112). Similarly, Solem and Foote (2004) report that collegial relationships were important for "promoting effective teaching and a culture that values teaching, in addition to prioritizing resources to help faculty develop teaching skills" (pp. 901-902).

Further evidence of the importance of nurturing significant professional relationships is found in Solem and Foote's (2004) study. They mention five coping strategies that early career geography faculty identified for overcoming early career issues and problems (such as, time management, balancing work and family life, and building collegial relationships). The first four of these coping strategies all involve some degree of relationship and reliance on other people to succeed. None of the following four strategies can be accomplished by the individual ECA acting alone: mentoring, networking, sharing ideas and resources, and seeking help from department chairperson. Only the fifth strategy, "practicing balance and moderation" can be achieved alone, although arguably the individual will still need others to help with this practice.

In terms of understanding the role of relationships, collegiality, and networking in the lives and success of academics, we have identified 'agency' as being very important. Warhurst (2008) discovered that "effectively agentic new lecturers appeared to reconcile their innovations with local, contextual practice…The lecturers who appeared to learn most effectively among their established colleagues were those who recognised their own learning needs and who proactively pursued them" (p. 465). This example emphasises the role of *individual* agency in personal growth as an academic. By contrast, Edwards and D'Arcy (2004) studied two groups of beginning teachers and looked at the role of *relational* agency in understanding how teachers teach and how teachers learn about students' learning. They draw on socio-cultural, psychological, and activity systems theories to argue that the "affective notion of relational agency needs to become more central to understanding pedagogy" (p. 147). Relational agency is, they argue, "an ability to seek out and use others as resources for action and equally to be able to respond to the need for support from others" (pp. 149-150). Edwards has written elsewhere (2005) about the development of the concept of agency as moving from an individual focus on the "capacity to identify the goals at which one is directing one's action and to evaluate whether one had been successful" to a more relational sense of agency that emphasises "mutual responsibility" (p. 169). Relational agency, then, is "a capacity to align one's thoughts and actions with those of others in order to interpret problems of practice and to respond to those interpretations" (Edwards, 2005, pp. 169-170). It involves, in short, "knowing how to know whom" (Hopwood & Sutherland, 2009). We argue in Part Five that successful ECAs possess a strong sense of relational agency.

Trowler and Knight (1999) also remind us that while "structures, the properties which give coherence and relative permanence to social practices in different times and locales are important…it is also important to recognise agency, the ability of people, individually or in groups, to consciously or unconsciously change those practices" (pp. 182-183). The following section considers the significance of the institutional structures and practices that support (and admittedly sometimes undermine) ECA success and relational agency, while remembering that neither the individual nor the environment alone can guarantee success.

4.2 Institutional contributions to ECA success

The literature identifies the following institutional factors as key to enhancing ECAs' chances of success: a supportive head of department; a collegial department; mentoring; and provision of resources and information at appropriate times.

Johnsrud and Rosser (2002) in a study on faculty satisfaction and retention in the US clearly state that "a combination of individual and organizational (including both structural and perceptual) variables determines the intention of a faculty member to stay or leave" (p. 521). In addition, Fairweather (2002) cites earlier research which shows that the most productive academics emphasise "self-knowledge, which includes personal interest, commitment, efficacy, psychological characteristics, satisfaction and morale. Less important…is social knowledge, which includes social values (eg rewards). Environmental influences have a tertiary role." (p. 28). The previous section dealt with the first of these and this section now turns to a consideration of social context and environmental influences. One important distinction to make here is that academics are, arguably, "tribal" (Becher, 1989) and their allegiance tends to be to their discipline or professional community (Ketteridge, et al, 2002; Laudel & Gläser, 2008) not so much to their institution. Ketteridge, et al, (2002) cite a study of seven disciplines in 11 UK universities, in which the researchers determined that "the discipline was reinforced as the dominant source of identity in academic lives. Departments and subject groups became more significant as teaching and research performance assumed more collective importance" (p. 275). Given this disciplinary, rather than wider institutional allegiance, the local departmental context is very important to an academic's potential success (Staniforth & Harland, 2006). As Trowler and Knight (2000) phrase it:

> The diversity and dynamism of a university's cultural configuration derives from smaller units within it. These are the cultural powerhouses of university life, places where culture is both enacted and constructed and where personal identity coalesces, is shaped and re-shaped (p. 30).

Within the department, then, the role of the chair or head of department is, according to the literature, a core factor influencing ECA's success (Austin, et al, 2007; Staniforth & Harland, 2006; Warhurst, 2008). As Boice puts it, "exemplary novices tend to have exemplary chairpeople" (cited in Bensimon, Ward & Sanders, 2000, p. 51). In a project that looked at highly productive research departments, Bland, et al, (2005) interviewed 37 heads of department in Minnesota and identified a strong departmental leader as key to encouraging scholarly productivity. Similarly, Solem & Foote (2004) found that "there was a strong positive correlation between chairperson support and faculty self-perception rating scores of teaching, research and service issues…and respondents who reported having a supportive, fair and compassionate chairperson were strikingly more happy in their present positions" (p. 901). And Ambrose, et al, (2005) show that the "role of department head (or chair) is vital to the success and satisfaction of junior faculty" (p. 818).

As important as the department chair are supportive departmental colleagues (Bland, et al, 2005; Lucas & Murry, 2002). Ramsden (1998) found that, "Less effective academics are more likely to be members of academic departments in which their colleagues rate the department's level of cooperation, discussion and participation low" (p. 363). In fact, a lack of collegiality while not necessarily *preventing* success outright, can often serve as a serious *impediment* to success:

> Most new faculty reported that the low levels of intellectual companionship they encountered were crucial deterrents to their own performance, morale and long-term professional development (Turner & Boice, 1987, pp. 43-44).

Within the activity systems or communities of practice represented by the new academics' departments lie a web of attitudes, values, practices, policies, and enterprises that can both enlighten and confuse an ECA. Negotiating, unravelling and attempting to internalise these entangled cultural norms and expectations occupies much of a new academic's time, and colleagues can help and hinder the process in significant ways:

> 'Socialisation', then, is not a process of 'assimilation' in which the NAA [New Academic Appointee] acquires the viewpoint, attitudes and definitions of other people or groups….Rather, it is a joint enterprise to create a situation in which the NAA will become fully involved in the social constitution of work practices, values and attitudes within structural constraints (Trowler & Knight, 2000, pp. 37-38).

Mentoring schemes are one way that institutions attempt to help socialise new academics. Such schemes have variable support in the literature. While there is no argument that mentoring is beneficial for new academics (Bland et al, 2005; Lucas & Murry, 2002; Norman, Ambrose & Huston, 2006; Turner & Boice, 1987), often the mentoring relationships established by the ECAs themselves, both within and beyond the institution, are more supportive than the mentors provided through formal schemes (Solem & Foote, 2004). In an article on the impact of mentoring on new faculty members' socialisation Cawyer et al (2002) argue that various types of mentoring are required for effective socialisation and ultimate success, including assigned, social, and convenient mentors. They found that, "while formal mentoring may be beneficial for facilitating socialization, it is likely that an *attitude* of mentoring (i.e., willingness to mentor newcomers) among faculty rather than isolated relationships is the primary advantage of mentoring programs" (Cawyer et al, 2002, p. 236, *emphasis added*). That is, even if the assigned mentor doesn't fulfil the expectations of the new academic, the act of assigning mentors creates a culture of mentoring within the department that makes it more likely newcomers will have access to other mentors (e.g., 'social' or 'convenient' mentors) in comparison with departments where mentoring is not the norm. Likewise, Bland et al (2005) found that

> Mentors can perform any number of tasks, but in ... productive departments, mentoring was most valued as a mechanism for conveying the culture and norms of the department, for facilitating grant writing, and for keeping tenure-track faculty on track (p. 79).

While departmentally-based mentoring potentially serves an important socialising function for ECAs, institution-wide induction or orientation programmes offer a significant companion in many places. The literature acknowledges the importance of such programmes (Nicholls, 2005; Staniforth & Harland, 2006; Sutherland, 2006), but there is a loud call for more contextualised, localised and discipline- or department-specific induction processes (Staniforth & Harland, 2006; Trowler & Knight, 2000). At such programmes, events or times, new academics need to find out about the provisions and resources available to them and the policies that determine how their work days and years should operate. For example, success in academia depends partly on: early exposure to promotion criteria and processes; the provision of flexible working hours, spaces and conditions; adequate working environments (the right type and amount of laboratory or computer equipment, for example); and adequate time to conduct teaching, research, service and administration. One resource provided by some institutions is release time from teaching and/or administration in order to concentrate on building a research profile and/or output.

The literature on the value of release time (such as sabbaticals) to concentrate on one area of work (usually research, but occasionally teaching development) is variable. Boice (1987) argues that release time from teaching does not enhance scholarly productivity in either teaching or research, and he provides data from five different experiments with productive and unproductive new and experienced faculty to demonstrate his claim. He argues that short and regular planning and writing (for both research and teaching) is better than 'binge' writing or release time. On the other hand, sabbaticals have been shown to enhance both morale and productivity when well structured and supported (Sima, 2000). And Bland, et al (2005) claim that, "nearly all studies of research productivity find that higher levels of research output are associated with lower levels of time commitment to teaching and service" (p. 146). For this reason and in an effort to enable new academics to function on the periphery of the departmental community before being expected to take on the full workload expected of experienced academics, some departments reduce the teaching and/or administrative commitments of new academics in their first year or so (Rice, Sorcinelli & Austin, 2000). This is important when considering that most new academics will be preparing and teaching courses for the first time:

> The time problems of ECRs are aggravated by the need to prepare their courses for the first time. Seven ECRs reported that the time pressure eased after they had prepared their courses. Apart from the two exceptions mentioned, all ECRs experienced a period in which there was no time for research at all (Laudel & Gläser, 2008, p. 400).

Arguably more effective than the reduction of teaching commitments in an academic's first year, however, is the opportunity to gain teaching experience prior to full-time academic appointment, particularly during graduate study or post-doctoral appointments.

4.3 The influence of prior experiences on success

The literature on ECA success trumpets the formational experiences offered by an holistic graduate studies experience. Both Fairweather (2002) and Solem and Foote (2004) cite several studies showing that the work and socialisation practices experienced during graduate study help to shape future

academics' long term success, attitudes, and behaviour, as well as their prospects of earning tenure or promotion. In terms of the research aspects of academic work, Williamson and Cable (2003) in a longitudinal study of 152 early career management professors, found that ECA research productivity is affected by: the qualifications of their dissertation advisor, their own productivity before appointment, their departments' scholarly output, and the reputation of the department in which they did their PhDs. As for teaching, Solem and Foote (2004) found that "respondents who taught a course or served as a teaching assistant during graduate school had more positive attitudes toward teaching issues and workplace matters" (p. 901). Also, ECAs with teaching experience during graduate study perceived that they were better teachers, and "enjoyed better relationships with department colleagues and expressed greater satisfaction for their professional positions" (p. 901).

Ideally, the literature suggests that ECAs' graduate study experiences would include the following: an experienced, collegial, well-networked, reputable supervisor with a prolific research record (Kamler, 2008; Williamson & Cable, 2003); opportunities to co-publish with the supervisor (Kamler, 2008); opportunities to teach a variety of different courses, and be involved in the development and planning of such courses (Macfarlane, 2007, Solem & Foote, 2004); early publication of research from the PhD (Kamler, 2008; Laudel & Gläser, 2008; Lucas & Murry 2002); a good mentor (Solem & Foote, 2004); and a collegial department with a good reputation and prolific publishing practices (Williamson & Cable, 2003).

In a study of 73 UK doctoral students' networks and connectivity, Pilbeam and Denyer (2009) summarise research indicating that some level of isolation is experienced by most doctoral students (even in the Sciences where shared lab spaces and collaborative research are common). They suggest that while one of the aims of doctoral education is to produce independent learners, some doctoral students "may interpret independence to mean isolation, and so have little interaction with other students and decreasing connection with their supervisor as [their own] expertise increases" (p. 304). Thus, many academics bring into their first placements a tradition or culture of independence that emphasises the 'lone scholar' approach and makes the networking and collaboration required of successful academics that much more difficult. Baruch and Hall (2004) claim that, with prestige as the measure of performance, success is set early in an academic's career, particularly because of relationships they do and do not form: "The academic career model builds on networking within and across organizations... [but] the choice of partners and research projects [is] up to the participants themselves" (p. 247) unlike in business, where projects and teams are often assigned by management. Choosing the right partners and projects is just one of the many decisions an ECA will have to make and the following section looks at the kinds of decisions that ECAs in our research project thought were significant in contributing to their success.

Part Five: Factors that influence success from a New Zealand ECAs perspective

The three key themes emanating from the literature on factors that contribute to ECA success were: personal characteristics, institutional influences and prior experiences. These themes find resonance in our participants' responses, but we have added a fourth theme: relational agency and academic citizenship. Many of the items listed under this fourth theme could be categorised under either personal characteristics or institutional influences, but creating this new category emphasises once again the importance of relational agency in ECA success. The graph below summarises the key factors influencing success that our respondents raised during the interview process. There was not as much difference between the university and polytechnic when considering contributors to success as there was when interviewees were asked about indicators of success. Clearly, as Figure Four shows, respondents feel that personal characteristics, relational agency and academic citizenship, have the strongest bearing on their success, with some institutional practices having a strong influence. A detailed table of all the factors identified as contributors to success is available in Table Three in Appendix Five.
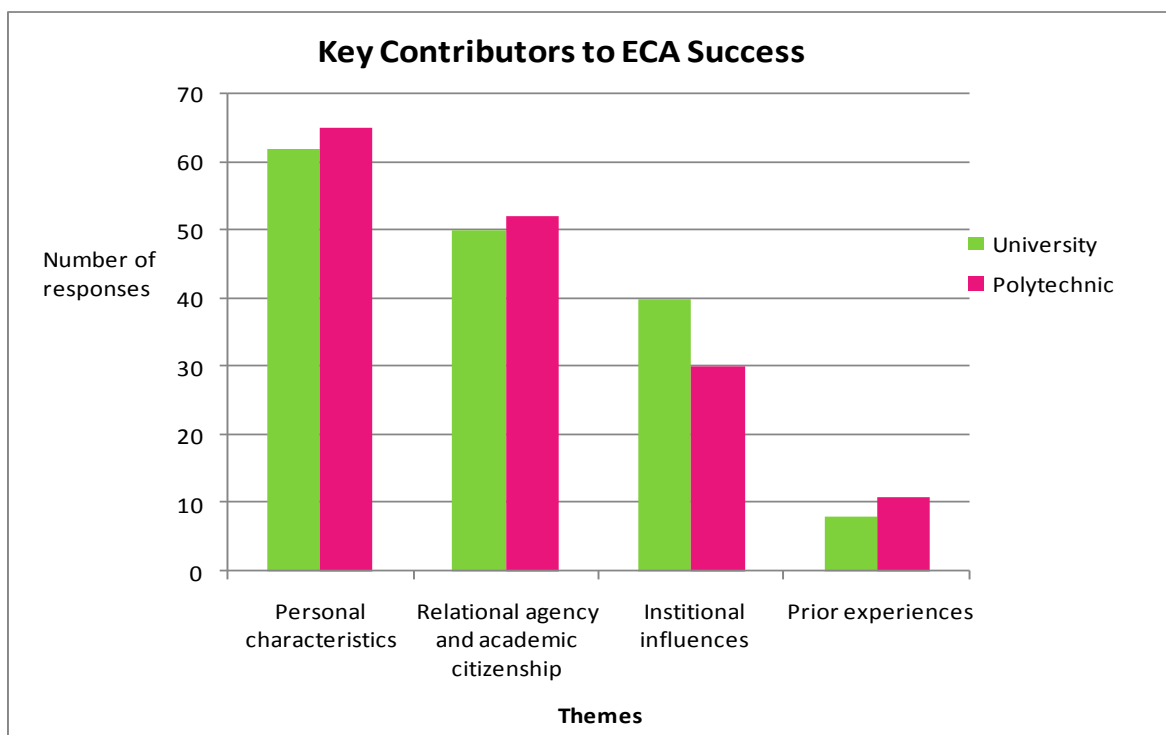
Figure Four: Contributors to ECA Success (by theme)

Hard work was identified by all respondents as a key factor in their success:

- I know what it's like to be in the real world, and also just my own personality. I give everything 110 per cent…and I think with having a strong personality I'm not backwards in coming forwards (Chris, Polytechnic, Trade)

- I work really hard. I'm probably one of the senior academic staff in this area, and to get seniority you have to meet certain criteria and have done certain things, so I definitely deserve that. I do work really hard (Maree, Polytechnic, Science).

All respondents also identified self-motivation and a proactive attitude as crucial to their having been identified as successful. Teresa, Michelle and Sydney all raised the importance of independence, while Suz was sensitive to and constantly looking for new opportunities:

- I would attribute part of my success to the fact that I don't need a lot of support…I'm kind of a self-starter, so I don't have people riding hard on me (Sydney, University, Law)

- Most of my success is self-initiated I think (Teresa, University, Social Sciences)

- I think [one of my strengths] is the ability to set goals and targets for myself…it requires a certain amount of self-management (Michelle, University, Law)

- I'm constantly looking for new resources, new teaching and learning ideas, new opportunities…so I've dropped myself into as many training opportunities as I can fit into my life (Suz, Polytechnic, Education)

By contrast, Maree desires greater support and advice than the others, but is *extremely* proactive about finding it:
- I know where I want to go and I have actually recently told my Dean where I want to go, because I feel it's important to make it known, just so they can keep a note if things do come up, then they know that you are interested in them…You definitely have to be the squeaky wheel to get oiled around here, but you do need a lot of squeaking if you want things done (Maree, Polytechnic, Science)

Successful New Zealand ECAs in our project also recognised the importance of establishing, nurturing and maintaining solid and influential relationships with people in their disciplinary, professional and local communities:
- There are two sets of skills around being an academic and one is very much about being driven by the intellect and sort of engaging the world of ideas, and I think I'm okay at that. But I also think there's the importance of seeing how your ideas relate to other people's ideas and also interacting with other people, and I think that I'm much better at that. There's that sort of level of social interaction that's important (Dean, University, Humanities)

- I have a huge range of international collaborators because if you want your research to be successful, you know you can't do it by yourself…I also discuss with them how to manage research groups and how to run things (William, University, Sciences)

- I've managed to build quite good relationships both within the academic field and outside the academic field and so I'm starting to be invited to do collaborative research with people within my own field, but also outside my field, and networks in government in a related sort of area as well (Michelle, University, Law)

For the polytechnic academics, the important relationships tended to be with the industry or profession, or with the local community and people, rather than just the discipline, as the following comments demonstrate:
- Knowing people in this industry is critical, and knowing the systems, not just knowing the [polytechnic] systems and processes, but knowing the region, the businesses, the people. It's crucial (Peter, Polytechnic, Science).

- Relationships with the centres and the teachers working in the centres are an important part of what we do…you actually have to get out there and know the people in the community (Lily, Polytechnic, Education)

Clearly the personal characteristics identified as important by our respondents correspond with the key characteristics in previous research studies on ECAs: confidence, balancing work and home life, and resilience, for example. While ECAs in our project perceived personal characteristics and relational agency as playing the biggest role in their success, they also acknowledged the role that institutional policies, practices and environment played in enabling them to be successful. In particular, and very much in line with the literature, a supportive manager was considered very important, especially among the university academics:
- My immediate boss (my head of school) and my next boss up (my Dean) are phenomenal. I have absolutely no doubt that they back me 100 per cent…the fact that I got associate professor when I did was purely because of [my Dean]…having that really strong support and that faith is amazing, and to know that you have that, I don't think there's anything more important (Heather, University, Science)

- I also sense that my current manager, my head of school, doesn't ask me to do things very often because he knows that I will [take too much on]…I suspect that there is some management going on to allow me still to be successful, but not to overload me (Kevin, University, Commerce)

- I've been pretty lucky really. We're pretty well supported, and my head of school's always been very good, allowing me to do lots of work at home and part of the reason for that is because I'm the primary caregiver of several children and she's been understanding and so, too, have my programme directors. So I feel well supported (Teresa, University, Social Sciences)

- My manager's been pretty good and he's been very supportive, particularly with helping me to get that scholarship (Ingrid, Polytechnic, Arts)

Even more significant than a supportive manager for the polytechnic academics, were strong relationships with colleagues and students:

- I am lucky to be within a team that is very supportive. I do know of other people who started around the same time as I did that haven't been as successful because they haven't had that support (Lily, Polytechnic, Education)

- The tutors in our office – we get on really, really well. It's not really even teaching support. It's more like personal support; it's great and we all just get on like a house on fire, so from that point of view, peer support is really useful (Maree, Polytechnic, Science)

- I have a capacity to develop good relationships with students, and I have good rapport with other staff generally…I think most of the acknowledgement, the meaningful acknowledgement, comes from my peers in the ways in which they support me when I seek support from them, and in which they seek support from me (Suz, Polytechnic, Social Sciences)

- I've identified one or two senior staff members in my faculty that I am very happy to just go and bounce ideas off …I believe our manager is over stretched, and he doesn't handle it too well. Although his door is always open, it's not always an effective place and I don't think that's his role (Chris, Polytechnic, Science)

These peer relationships in the polytechnic sometimes came about because of the ECAs' own initiative in seeking support, but a culture of peer observation of teaching and mentoring was also perceived as helpful for the polytechnic academics:
- I've had someone from my own area come in and watch me…it keeps us on our toes and for me that's more of a performance issue. Making sure that I'm doing the right job and that I can offer that service to someone else that I know about rather than just saying, "Oh, I don't know about your content, but you were nice to the students" (Peter, Polytechnic, Science)

The polytechnic has a peer observation of teaching scheme in place, whereas the university does not, so the polytechnic respondents nearly all made mention of this scheme in some way. Some, however, put their proactive personalities to use and ensured they got the most out of what the institution offered:
- I've made the peer observations work for me. I want those opportunities to be valuable, in terms of either my own professional development and ideally, in terms of the peer that I'm observing. And when I've set those up in a way that I know they're going to be valuable, then they work for me. I don't think peer observation always works. It's kind of compulsory here and I don't think people necessarily have a lot of understanding about the benefit of it, or the way to use it constructively (Suz, Polytechnic, Education)

The university academics did not engage in peer observation so much, as it did not appear to be a well established cultural practice within the institution, but the provision of mentors was considered important by several of the university academics:
- I would say having a mentor who encouraged me to get started with my research sort of straight away was helpful…Certainly having my mentor willing to read my drafts and bounce ideas off of is very helpful (Sydney, University, Law)

- There is a mentoring programme here and I was part of that, although my job was such a mess until I moved departments that my poor mentor kind of spent more time helping me through the nuts and bolts stuff than doing the kind of generative, predictive stuff (Bianca, University, Humanities)

Where mentors were not formally provided, ECAs at both institutions were proactive in seeking mentors within and beyond their institutions:
- I didn't really have any input from senior staff in my school, but I did use an external mentor and I used one of my senior colleagues in [another department] to give me advice (Kevin, University, Commerce)

- I've found a mentor, a couple of mentors, because I went out there and have got them, but new people struggle. It took me a couple of years to get that. So mentoring is a huge benefit – somebody who's willing to read your papers and say, "How is it going?" Otherwise it can be incredibly isolating, working on your own, and that's essentially, how I felt a lot of the time that I've been [here]. I've felt on my own in terms of my research (Michelle, University, Law)

- I have an informal personal learning network of like-minded people who are interested in [my subject], on both sides of the Tasman. I have people here, and then I have people in Australia that I've never met but that I work quite closely with and we advise each other and help each other with things (Karen, Polytechnic, Education)

In line with the literature, New Zealand ECAs in our project identify having good and *different* mentors as very important to their success. Some, such as Peter, were very deliberate in identifying and using different mentors for different aspects of the job:
- I seek [mentoring] actively… Here locally, I've got the faculty research leader and a research scientist, both of them have got 30, 40 years in research and so forth, and they are certainly mentoring me. There was a staff member who was very, very good as well who retired a couple of weeks ago, and his input was really useful,

too. Having three versus two is just always a better picture. But it's sort of more on their good graces and my seeking it out, so to speak, rather than actively put forth (Peter, Polytechnic, Science)

Also important, at both institutions, was some involvement in activities, programmes or events run by the centrally based academic development unit (ADU). In particular, ECAs acknowledged the value they received from attending orientation programmes and/or teaching workshops:

- The adult teaching certificate was good. It was really good. It was really supportive and really full on, and it made me think about what I was doing and it taught me a lot of systems about adult teaching that I perhaps intuitively knew but it gave me the theoretical background for that (Lily, Polytechnic, Education)

Some of the respondents expressed a desire to see some of these programmes made compulsory for all new academics:

- I feel pretty confident now. I think when I was younger, I would have liked quite a lot more actually. When I first came here, I did the video thing with [the ADU]. I would have liked to have done that earlier...I think that was really useful but scary as well and so sometimes I think some of these things maybe should be compulsory. Like, if this is your first academic appointment, you must do X number of these courses through the [ADU] in your own time but in the next three years or something (Heather, University, Science)

- I've made use of the people doing some of the editing of multimedia, the teaching aids people. That's primarily been that side rather than improving my pedagogy but perhaps they should round us up and force us to, because I mean I do feel that my teaching is good but I don't think that it couldn't be better and it's just a question of time, to be honest, to find the time to do those things. I think they've very valuable and I know the people who use them have found it very valuable (Dean, University, Humanities)

One of the most valuable aspects of these centrally run programmes was often the opportunity to meet other academics from around the institution:

- I enjoyed the networking with the other new tutors (Chris, Polytechnic, Trade)

- They have the orientation programme here, and I made some good mates there pretty early on...it was really good for meeting all the people (Bianca, University, Humanities)

- The orientation programme was good in that you met other new academics starting at the university and that was useful (Teresa, University, Social Sciences)

There were some reservations about the provision of academic development, which will be considered in the next section. What is important to note here is yet another reminder of the importance of relationships in the success of ECAs. This emphasis on relational actions, policies, events and strategies can also be seen in the following table, which is a summary from the follow-up questionnaire. It lists a series of 28 statements that participants were asked to respond to using two 4-point Likert Scales, the first indicating the item's importance to their success (with 4 being "Very Important", and 1 "Very Unimportant") and the second scale asking them to indicate the effectiveness of each item at their own institutions (where 4 was "Very Effective" and 1 was "Very Ineffective"). The table provides means for each statement, and ranks the statements in order from most agreement to least. Statements that fit under the broad category of "relational" are highlighted in yellow. All others are considered to be policies or provision of resources or information. As can be seen, ECAs rate relational items more highly than provision of resources and information.

Table One: Factors Influencing Success – Importance and Effectiveness

Factors Influencing Success	Importance to Your Success		Effectiveness at Your Institution	
	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean
Opportunities to participate in decision-making processes	1	3.85	19	2.21
Support from Head of Department/manager to apply for promotion	2=	3.79	9	2.46
Senior colleagues who are interested in your progress and well-being	2=	3.79	2	2.92
Availability of resources for conducting research	4	3.77	6	2.58
Good communication between management and academics	5=	3.71	25	1.93
Opportunities to meet with disciplinary colleagues beyond the institution	5=	3.71	14	2.28
Support from departmental colleagues	7	3.64	4	2.79
A Head of Department who is committed to your success	8	3.57	8	2.46
Feedback from manager/s about your academic performance	9=	3.57	22	2.14
Information about criteria for promotion	9=	3.57	5	2.64
Flexible working hours	9=	3.57	3	2.92
Availability of resources for teaching	9=	3.57	7	2.54
Workload policy within department/faculty/college	9=	3.57	28	1.57
Travel funds to present papers or conduct research	14	3.54	21	2.17
Attractive/competitive salary and benefits	15	3.50	24	2.00
Teaching relief in the early years of academic appointment	16=	3.50	23	2.08
Opportunity to work from home/out of the office	16=	3.50	1	3.23
Paid or unpaid research leave	18	3.38	11=	2.44
Formal mentoring programme for new academics	19	3.35	15	2.27
Rewards for good teaching	20	3.29	20	2.18
Professional assistance for developing/improving teaching	21	3.14	17	2.25
Formal orientation programme for new academics	22	3.14	13	2.31
Regular contact with senior colleagues in your department	23	3.07	27	1.76
Professional assistance in obtaining externally funded grants	24	3.00	11=	2.44
Opportunities to meet other new academics within the institution	25	2.93	16	2.25
Peer observation of teaching	26	2.93	18	2.22
Rewards for good research	27	2.85	10	2.44
Regular contact with senior colleagues in other disciplines	28	2.28	26	1.77

All but one statement (regular contact with senior colleagues in other disciplines) received positive responses (a mean of 2.5 or more) from participants in terms of how important they thought the item was to their success. Involvement in decision-making processes, support from the Head of Department to apply for promotion, and senior colleagues who take an interest in your well-being were considered *most* important overall. By contrast, when asked how effective their institution was at implementing such policies, features or behaviours, only seven items made it into the upper half of responses, with none in the upper quartile of responses. Clearly, ECAs in both institutions are dissatisfied with the level of support and provision they have received. The interview process uncovered the roots of some of this disquiet, and the next section explores some of the barriers to success that ECAs expressed during interviews.

Part Six: Barriers to Success from a New Zealand ECA perspective

While ECAs attribute much of their success to their own strength of character, and some good institutional policies, when it comes to barriers to success, the institution bears the brunt of the responsibility, according to our ECAs, as evidenced in the graph below.
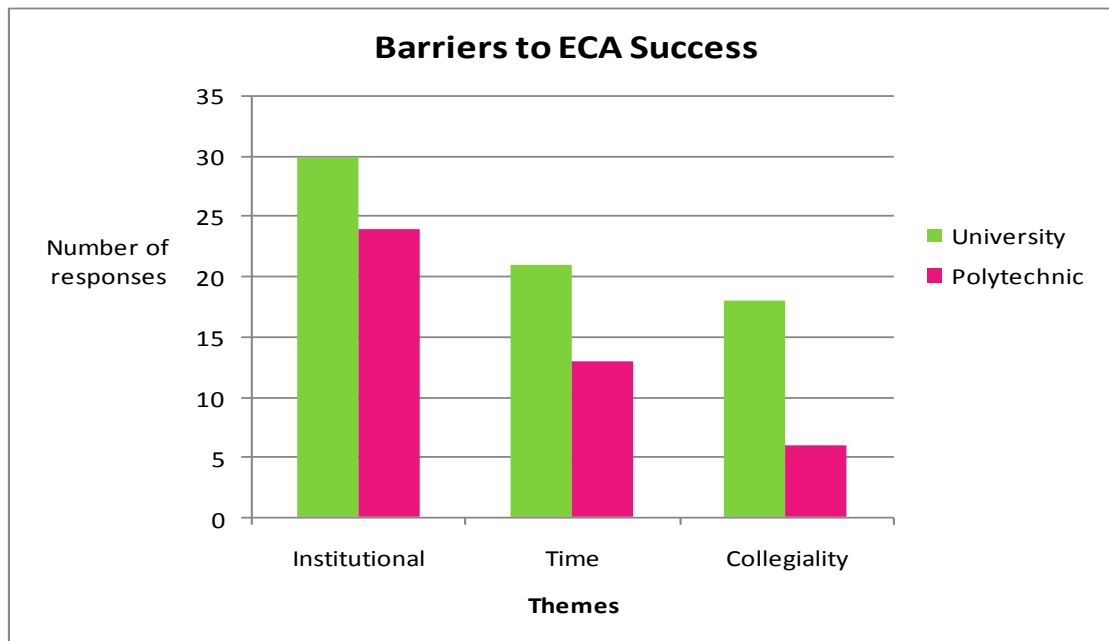

Figure Five: Barriers to ECA Success

The most problematic areas for ECAs in navigating their way through their first years were a lack of advice about promotion, and induction processes that lacked specificity and timeliness (details are available in Table Five in Appendix Five). Bianca sums up unequivocally how she felt about the lack of advice around promotion processes:

- Oh, I'm so [annoyed] about this. Dr Phil would have a field day with this, I'm so…bitter about it….No one told us … that you can apply for a promotion when you're on probation and that kind of eclipses the probation process. So we sat there like dumb idiots for two years waiting out our time and we could have been well and truly applying for promotion…. And I thought, maybe I'm just really dumb, like we can all have things that we just didn't hear or whatever but then there's other people that are in the same boat and I was really [annoyed] about that. I was like, that sucks. It sucks at a system level and it sucks at the level of nobody in my department thought that they'd come up to me and say, "Do you know what the system is for promotion because we could just have five minutes and I can just tell you?" Like, no one, head of school, head of programme, nobody ever came to me in my first two years (Bianca, University, Humanities)

This perceived lack of advice and guidance around promotion processes demonstrates the issues ECAs have in even identifying their needs when they do not yet know how the systems of the institution work, let alone what questions to ask and of whom. Furthermore, these processes and information are often department specific, so no generic induction or development programme will help fill those gaps in a new lecturer's socialisation process. Where Bianca earlier talked about how useful it was to meet other new academics at the university's centrally run orientation programme, she went on to express dissatisfaction with the generic nature of the programme:

- Probably some of the informational stuff, like what we need to know, we *weren't* told. And we had a lot of detail about stuff that you actually can't take in when you've just arrived. You kind of get bombarded with all this information, but you don't really know what to do with it. So they just gave us a lot of information because they do everyone, from across all faculties, and a lot of stuff had to be generalised so much (Bianca, University, Humanities).

Janet, from the polytechnic had a similar experience: "I think because I was pretty much drowning, I wanted everything to relate to what I was doing, and I found it hard to get the bigger picture" (Janet, Polytechnic, Social Sciences). And Ingrid sought specific teaching development elsewhere because she found the teaching development at the polytechnic did not suit her style of teaching:

- I have to say that doing the Masters at [another institution] has probably been the thing that helped me the most because of being exposed to a much larger department…to see people who were teaching in my area but at a more advanced level, was actually the most helpful thing for me because I just find that a lot of the teaching stuff that's offered here does not address our particular area very well…. So I find that a lot of the learning approaches that are taught here in the courses are much more applicable to more vocational areas, perhaps (Ingrid, Polytechnic, Arts)

Other barriers to success include the issue of working out how to balance the demands of teaching and research, when the ECAs themselves desire to be both reputable researchers and good teachers, in an environment which increasingly values and rewards research, but demands a lot of time for teaching:

- The biggest impediment to my research is other commitments. So teaching is one. It's not to say I don't like teaching. I like it very much, but it takes time. Time is big. Actually, as a university, I don't think there's a shortage of money and travel opportunities here. The biggest challenge is getting time to focus on research (Dean, University, Humanities)

- I think that research is more important to my career advancement and my reputation. However, if I have a class to teach, I would never not prepare for a class so that I could do my research. And so if something is going to go by the wayside, it more often is that research would give way to teaching than vice versa (Sydney, University, Law)

Even the polytechnic academics are feeling this pressure:

- The teaching workload is just so high and with the stream coordinator's part and all there is to do, people like me can't even get my annual leave taken…so I guess the research will be done in my own time, at home…It's kind of like taking notice of the naughty child, really, because the students are there. You've got to deliver. You get evaluated. You hear about it from your manager, so that gets my attention, so teaching has more of a priority (Janet, Polytechnic, Social Sciences)

While several of the ECAs made pointed remarks about the lack of time available for conducting and writing high quality research, and the lack of people resources available for planning, developing and assessing teaching, one ECA implied that success in teaching actually inhibits success in research (or at least prevented him from gaining time away on research leave):

- I've indicated to my head of school that [research leave] is something that I'm interested in but the teaching aspect rears its head: the fact that I'm co-ordinating a first year course and teaching with contract lecturers. Okay, so if I go on leave, what's going to happen? There's not a long or medium term plan. There is no senior staff member saying, "Look, you've been here for six years, you're now entitled to a full year research and study leave. Have you thought about where you might want to go, what you might want to do, how long you might want to do it for?" I suspect it's more like, "Oh **, well no one mention research and study leave to him because we simply can't afford for him to go at the moment!" So, yeah, six months with my head in my books wouldn't hurt me at all. And it's unclear quite when that might happen without undue disruption. Because I care, you know, I have a really long term view and I'm sort of a citizen, a good citizen and I don't want there to be undue pressure on the school (Kevin, University, Commerce)

This issue of not wanting to let down the department or one's colleagues makes it to fourth-equal place on the list of barriers to success for our ECAs. While it is clear from the literature that success in academia comes, in part, from good relationships with one's colleagues and from being a good "academic citizen" (as implied in the quote from Kevin above), for ECAs there are challenges with this notion of citizenship. It is difficult for ECAs to speak out and express unease with departmental practices or expectations when they may not yet have established the rules of the game, so to speak. It is also challenging for them to ask questions that may make them appear ignorant, or to say no to requests for help from more senior colleagues. While this willingness to help colleagues may mark them as good departmental citizens, taking on extra loads can often come at the expense of their own personal and professional development, however:

- I'm quite apt to take on extra roles which is maybe a bad thing…I quite often take on things because I'm new and I'm keen, but I don't know for how much longer I could (Chris, Polytechnic, Science)

- If I quit or was fired tomorrow, the department would have a bit of a hole in their finances. I look that I should be paying my way, that's important, and also that I'm just a good colleague really. I try and support my colleagues as much as possible and contribute where I can in the department. I was asked to teach a course which basically everyone else refused to teach but I thought it should be taught and we thought we should have it, but nobody wanted to teach it because it's a tough course to teach, so I took that on…but then I write these grants during my summer, so some of my colleagues sit on their arses for two months or three months, say. I work very hard in these three months (William, University, Science)

- It wasn't until last year that I found out how much I should have been teaching compared to how much they're making me teach. So my teaching will be less intensive now that I know what my rights are (Bianca, University, Humanities)

As these and earlier comments demonstrate, issues of academic citizenship, collegiality and timely provision of information and resources all rate strongly with our ECAs. One of the most striking surprises for several of the respondents was the *lack* of collegiality they experienced:

- I think I was very naïve as to what an academic life really was. I had no clue when I look back now, really. And that was a huge shock and a bit of a disappointment really because I had this lovely fairytale picture in my head of what an academic life was…it hadn't occurred to me how much politics there is in academia…there's so little power in academia and it's fought over so fiercely…So that all came as an enormous shock to me that people wouldn't be working in this lovely, collegial environment where the whole point was free thinking and to motivate thinking and all of that (Heather, University, Science)

- I came in here with a fairly rosy eyed picture about what it was like to be a member of an academic community. And I know it does happen in other places but certainly I've learned a lot of hard lessons since I've been here, about what I can expect from colleagues. On the other hand, some of them have been wonderful…I can't underestimate the building of collegial atmosphere as an important element to research (Michelle, University, Law).

Other surprises or disappointments for ECAs related to their ability to balance work and home life. The table below show the means of participants' responses to a series of 10 statements about their satisfaction and work-life balance. The 4-point Likert Scale for questions 1-7 was 4 = "Strongly Agree" and 1 = "Strongly Disagree", so the desired response is 4, with a mean of 2.5 or more being positive. For statements 8-10 the desired response was 1, so the mean should be lower than 2.5.

Table Two: Work-Life Balance		Mean
1	I enjoy the challenges of my job	3.42
2	If I could do it all over again, I would still embark on an academic career	3.36
3	I am happy with the amount of time I spend with my family	2.43
4	I can arrange my work to get enough physical exercise	2.43
5	I regularly find time for myself, eg to read for pleasure, pursue a hobby, etc	2.43
6	I always use all my annual leave or time off	2.21
7	I control the role of work in my life	2.14
	In the questions below, the desired response is a mean of 2.5 or less	Mean
8	Work often takes priority over other activities	3.57
9	Family and friends comment on my high number of work hours	3.42
10	I seldom find time to relax	3.21

Clearly, ECAs are dissatisfied with the dominance of work in their life, and find it difficult to make time for leisure, family, holidays and relaxation. Despite these surprises, hindrances and barriers, all ECAs report that they very much enjoy the challenges of their work, and all but one would still be likely to embark on an academic career. This enjoyment of their job carries over into their relationships with and influence on their students, and the following section considers some of the ways in which ECAs say that they have had an impact on their students' lives.

Part Seven: The potential influence of successful ECAs on students

This project has not attempted to measure conclusively the impact of successful ECAs on students, as we are not convinced that such measurement is even possible. However, ECAs did identify some important influences on students. Most interviewees were reluctant to claim a direct relationship between their own success and students' learning or future possibilities; nearly all respondents, in fact, were very humble and questioned whether the adjective "success" could or should be applied to them personally. Despite these reservations, their responses to the question, "What impact has your success had on your students?" did shed some light on the potential influence that ECAs can have on students.

Part Five of this report showed that our ECAs consider personal characteristics and relational agency to be crucial to their success. Given this, it is not surprising that the personal traits ECAs highlight as important to their success are traits that they emphasise in their interactions with students. They see their own motivation, enthusiasm, confidence and hard work as contributing to their success in both teaching and research, and as having a positive effect on the learning experience subsequently provided for students, as Michelle and Suz explain:

- They get a better experience in the classroom. I'm better able to share my enthusiasm with them….they come away at the end of the course with better skills and perhaps more enthusiasm for the subject matter than if I'd been a terrible teacher and made the whole thing really boring. And it's great when my students end up working in the area because they've been inspired by something that I've done (Michelle, University, Law).

- I think if I feel positive about my success, then it inspires me to continue to do well and continue to strive for excellence and to take risks and be innovative in my teaching… and some of my teaching skills that have been recognised can now be modelled and shared with other teachers, both in the institution and in the community (Suz, Polytechnic, Social Sciences)

Furthermore, the majority of interviewees indicated that they functioned in many ways as role models for students (though few used that terminology specifically) in terms of what is expected in the discipline, profession or industry, and what students will need to do to be successful. Ingrid and Lily provide a couple of perspectives on this in their comments below:

- I think it makes them confident that they're being taught by somebody who knows what they're doing and has had recent success and can actually show them the ropes (Ingrid, Polytechnic, Fine Arts)

- Students actually like the fact that I know what it's like to be on the coal face, so to speak. I can actually use examples of my teaching life to support how it is (Lily, Polytechnic, Education)
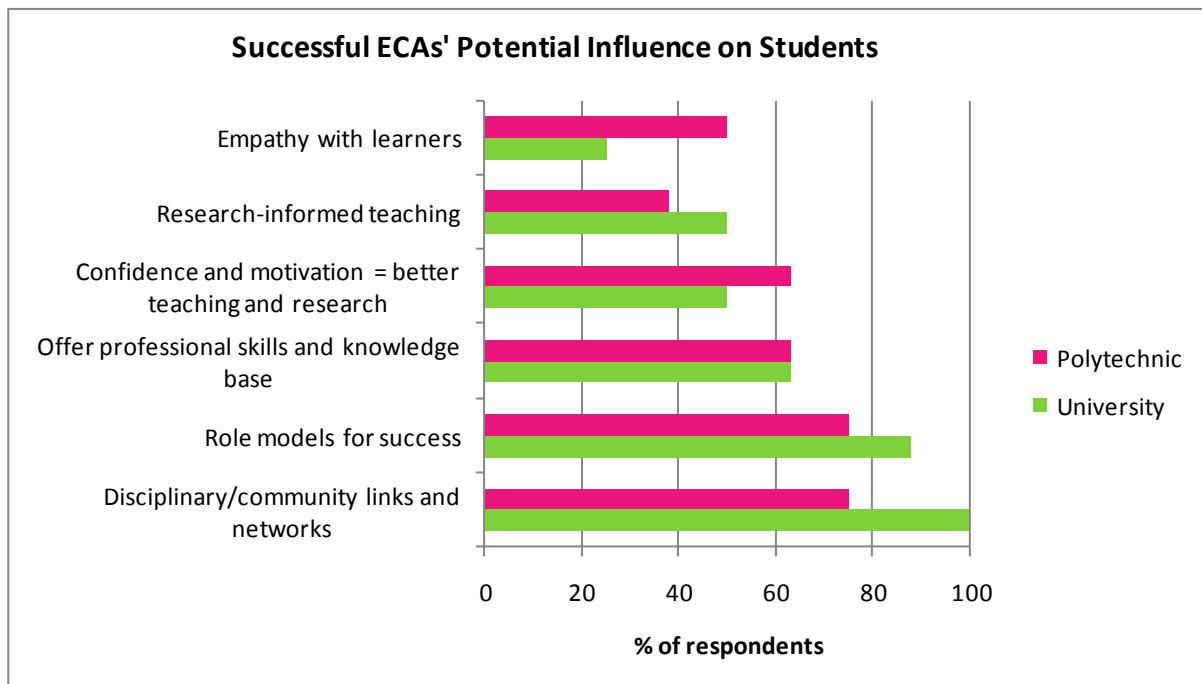

Figure Six: Successful ECAs' Potential Influence on Students

Figure Six shows the commonality around the idea that academics are role models for students (82% see themselves as modelling successful practice or as inspiring students to be successful). The graph also shows that ECAs generally agree that their success in the discipline, industry or wider community opens doors for their students in all sorts of ways, as evidenced by the comments below:

- The rapport, the research, the being at the cutting edge of things or at least knowing where the cutting edge is, attending those conferences, publishing those papers, that kind of experience and rapport, I think, and they say this unprompted, which is amazing, they really benefit from it…the experience and the balance they like too (Peter, Polytechnic, Science)

- I think that to the extent that they come across my writing in their research or I convey some sort of war story about something I've done in practice, it gives me more credibility with them (Sydney, University, Law)

- I definitely think it's helped them because I'm happy, they're happy…and I help to set them up with jobs at the end of it, with contacts. If I think there's jobs going, I'll tell them who to send their CVs to, things like that (Maree, Polytechnic, Science)

One academic described how she actively engages in the campus community, explaining that she does so because she cares about what education looks like and believes that she consequently contributes to the strategic direction and positioning of the institution. Academics who actively influence the programme or curriculum help to create strategic positioning of their discipline within the industry or wider community. This in turn benefits the graduates and their employment options or opportunities and provides students with the opportunity to learn and engage in an authentic, professional community.

Beyond the professional community, an ECA's success in their *discipline* is particularly influential on postgraduate students, as several of the university participants indicated. It provides their postgraduate students with access to more people who are influential in the discipline, more publishing and networking opportunities, and more equipment and resources:

- I've got good overseas networks and what that has meant for graduate students is that when you need someone to mark a PhD, you've got contacts, good contacts. That's important. (Teresa, University, Social Sciences)

- I think they have really good resources because I have really good resources…they get access to things that a lot of other students don't get access to. And while I think my international reputation is slowly growing, I think at least nationally working for me probably means something (Heather, University, Science)

- I do a lot of travelling. I have a lot of international collaborators. For example, this year I've had two students go to Stanford to do work there. I had one student spend a month at Oxford University. So when I go abroad and I meet collaborators, then we set up collaborations…I try and give [my students] as much opportunities as can, basically, and they appreciate that (William, University, Science)

Disciplinary reputation and respect from colleagues also influences students' learning experiences in the classroom, in that the ECAs' networks can be drawn upon for classroom visits, as Bianca describes below:

- They get people coming in and talking to them, because when I have colleagues come and visit me I drag them into my classrooms. Like [my colleague] comes over from the US and he's a real hot shot in [the field] and I drag him in, so these students who have been reading essays that he's written over the last two years of taking courses with me, suddenly he's there for an hour…Also just networks that I'm able to set them up with. So when they're doing research essays, I can say, "Well, why don't I set up by email with this person who's the main scholar around that question?" So, hopefully it means they're just a little bit closer; because I'm part of these networks, it makes my students closer to them (Bianca, University, Humanities).

Also, there was general agreement that successful academics transfer and share the experiences they had in their own learning (as PhD students, or as current students, as was the case for several of the polytechnic academics who were completing their own postgraduate qualifications while working full time). Successful ECAs continue to see themselves as learners, and thus empathise with students as they encourage them to be life-long, independent learners.

Part Eight: Recommendations

Given what we have discovered about ECA success – the various conceptions of success in academia, what contributes to and hinders the potential for ECAs to be successful, and the possible impact that successful ECAs can have on students – what can we do differently to help *all* ECAs to survive and succeed in their institutions?

8.1 Recommendations for new ECAs

This section provides a brief summary of themes that ECAs should consider as they begin their academic careers, and progress through the system. We have encapsulated these ideas in a flyer which we hope will be useful for new ECAs and for academic development staff, Heads of School, and managers working with new ECAs. Please see the Ako Aotearoa website for ways to obtain copies of this flyer.

Theme	Questions and Pointers
Resourcefulness	- Do you have everything that you need to do your job well? Do you know who to ask if you *don't* have what you need? - Are you aware of (and do you use) all the services and resources available on campus for you (*and* for your students)? - If a student or colleague asked you for help, would you a) be willing to help and b) know what to do and who to contact for support? - Do you make regularly the most of the professional development opportunities that come your way? - Have you volunteered to serve on any committees? - Do you know how the promotion processes at your institution work and what you personally need to do to get promoted? - Have you set goals or defined a pathway for your academic career? Have you asked anyone senior for help with this? How regularly do you revisit those goals?
Relationships	- Have you identified and do you spend time with 'kindred spirits' – people who think similarly or are engaged in similar work as you? - Are you engaged in inter- and cross-disciplinary collaborations - Do you have a supportive group of friends and/or family? - Who are your mentors and how do you nurture those relationships? - Do you know the top 100 scholars in your field? Do they know you? - Have you maintained the relationships you established at the institutions you studied or worked at earlier?
Risk and Resilience	- How do you react when you receive evaluations of your teaching from students and colleagues? - What is your response when you receive a 'reject' or 'revise and resubmit' response from an editor? - How prepared are you for your performance review meetings with your manager and how long does it take you to recover from and/or respond to the feedback you receive? - How many people, other than students, have seen you teach lately? - How do you react when you are asked to do something you don't want to do at work? - What different forms of feedback do you seek on your academic work, from whom, and how often? - What new technologies have you experimented with lately? - Do you know how to say "no"? - How many people do you share your scholarly work with before you present it for publication or performance? - How often, and from how many different organisations, do you apply for funding or grants to support the teaching and research work you do?

Academic Citizenship	• Are you a willing and active member of your department? In what ways? • How often do you see your colleagues? Do you have morning tea or lunch or social drinks together on a semi-regular basis? • Which committees, task forces or working groups – within and beyond your department – do you currently serve on and which have you identified as important options for the future? • How do you demonstrate care for your students and colleagues? • What service-related activities do you engage in beyond your institution?
Balance	• How do you protect your family/leisure/personal time from encroaching work responsibilities? • What hobbies do you have and/or exercise do you do that keeps you healthy and sane? • What organisational tools, routines and practices do you use to help balance your time effectively? • Do you write regularly and often, or do you engage in "binge writing" sessions? • How do you make time for students?

8.2 Recommendations for Institutions

ECAs in this project identified several institutional issues that they felt could be addressed to improve the experience for all new academics. Some of these issues fall under the purview of the Head of School (HoS) or Department, while others are Human Resources or senior management responsibilities. We outline some of these below for anyone working with ECAs to consider.

Support from the HoS is considered absolutely crucial not only for all new academics' success, but also for their survival. The majority of interviewees in our project talked in glowing terms about the support they had received from their HoS, but some had felt stymied, even sabotaged, by the actions (or lack) of their HoS. Simple actions such as offering to help with preparing a promotion application, or verbally expressing support for the new academic in front of other department members can make a big difference to how an ECA conceives of their role in the department. Regular feedback on performance and progress is desired by ECAs, as well as good communication between management and academics, but such feedback and communication are not always forthcoming, as evidenced by our study (see Table One).

Opportunities for "networking" and mentoring are vital to ECA success and survival. Successful ECAs have wide and influential networks of disciplinary, inter-disciplinary, departmental, institutional, and social colleagues and regularly seek opportunities to consolidate, expand and nurture these networks. Institutions can help with such networking by providing opportunities for academics to meet like-minded colleagues at professional development events, institution-wide teaching or research days, social events, academic talks, seminars, and conferences. Funding for travel to conferences and to meet national and international colleagues is also important and should be widely available.

Other resources and information, such as equipment for research, and clear information about the criteria for promotion, will influence the decisions and actions that a new academic takes. Institutions will serve new academics well by making sure that criteria are clear around all expectations, and that ECAs are given opportunities to participate in decision-making processes at all levels of governance within the institution.

Part Nine: Conclusion

This research has focussed on two small groups of successful ECAs at two very different New Zealand tertiary institutions. It does not purport to be generalisable to all ECAs in New Zealand; nor does it claim to have uncovered all the issues confronting New Zealand ECAs. However, it has identified some key themes that are common across both groups, as well as issues and ideas that are unique to the university or polytechnic context. It has gone some way towards addressing the gap in an area of research that was sparse in the New Zealand literature, and it contributes further to the international literature on ECAs. Since this pilot project was conducted, we have begun interviews and surveys with successful ECAs in two other countries and at least ten other institutions, and we are looking forward to analysing this data in light of what this pilot project has brought forward. We urge other researchers to talk with ECAs in their own institutions about their conceptions of success, the contributors and barriers to success in academic life, and what influence successful ECAs are having on students.

ECAs are not a homogeneous group. They come from different educational backgrounds, different professional and working communities, and bring with them different understandings and experiences of research, teaching, academic citizenship and service. The two groups involved in this pilot project came from different institutional settings and it is clear that there are contrasts in their experience of ECA life and their conceptions of success. University academics have a stronger focus on research, while polytechnic academics direct more of their energy and time to teaching, for example. Both groups, however, agree that without personal satisfaction and balance they would not call themselves successful. Both groups also emphasise the importance of building close, wide and varied relationships with people within and beyond the institution who will act as supporters, motivators, inspirations, role models, and mentors. And they acknowledge that the personal characteristics of resourcefulness and resilience are instrumental in surviving the first few years of academic life. They also agree that each of their institutions could be doing more to support their survival and success. It therefore behoves those of us in managerial and support roles to work with all new academic staff to provide, and encourage them to seek, the resources, people, equipment, spaces, energy and inspiration that they need to do their jobs well. Sometimes it's just a matter of knowing the right questions to ask and of whom to ask them.

Acknowledgements

Appendix One: Key Studies on ECA Success, Productivity, Induction, Socialisation and Satisfaction

Author/s	Year	Study and Participants	Methods	"Theory" or Framework/Model
Australia/New Zealand				
Bazeley	2003	30 researchers, 52 HODs, and nearly 500 PhDs and recent graduates	Interviews, survey	Criteria for determining early career status
Ramsden	1994	890 academics in 18 Australian institutions in 1989	Survey	Academic productivity
Gilbert & Cameron	2002	33 university academics and 17 College of Education teachers	Surveys and focus groups	Understandings of teaching and research
Laudel & Gläser	2008	16 early career researchers at 6 Australian universities, from sciences, social sciences and humanities	Biographical interviews and bibliometric analysis of interviewees' research trails	Organisational sociology and career theory
Staniforth & Harland	2003	9 NZ and 6 UK recently appointed academics – experiences of being a new academic	Action research – interviews, meetings, reflective diaries	Critical reflection on practice
United Kingdom				
Archer	2008	8 young early career academics	Interviews	Authenticity
Macfarlane	2007	30 academics from UK, US, Canada, Australia and Europe	Interviews	Academic citizenship
Nicholls	2005	20 new lecturers in the UK, constructions of teaching, learning and research	Role constructs using repertory grids and subsequent interviews	Personal construct theory
Staniforth & Harland	2006	9 new academics and 6 Heads of Department in a UK university – induction practices	Interviews	Grounded theory/Professional learning/Induction as collective social practice
Trowler & Knight	2000	24 new academics in UK, and 50 new faculty in North America	Interviews	Activity systems theory and communities of practice
Warhurst	2008	29 new lecturers in one research-intensive UK university	Learning logs, sociograms, interviews	Situated learning theory – social learning for new lecturers in academic workplaces
United States				
Bland et al	2006	2520 new hires in research universities (1999 data)	Statistical analysis of National Survey of Postsecondary Faculty (NSOPF) data	Productivity and commitment
Bland et al	2005	37 HODs in Minnesota in 2001	Interviews	Productivity in research
Turner & Boice	1987	66 new faculty (1985)	Survey, interviews, observation, journals, logs, ratings	New faculty satisfaction and productivity
Solem & Foote	2004	40 early career faculty interviewed and 92 early career faculty surveyed	Interviews and survey	Boice's IRSS theory (Involvement, Regimen, Self-management, Social

				Skills), plus a 5th dimension of "Place"
Norman, Ambrose & Huston	2006	123 current and former faculty	Interviews and Scenario-based discussions	Faculty satisfaction and retention
Williamson & Cable	2003	152 early career faculty in Management	Longitudinal statistical analysis of number of outputs	Management research productivity and predictors
Hitchcock et al	1995	Analysis of 47 books and articles on faculty networks, productivity, relationships and success	Literature review	Professional networks
Reybold	2003	30 education academics at 14 universities	Interviews, journals, CV, web and document analysis	Socialisation
Fairweather	2002	Productivity data from 7835 academic staff in 4-year institutions in the 1992-1993 NSPSF survey	Statistical analysis of teaching and research outputs	Decision modelling, and teaching and research productivity
Austin, Sorcinelli & McDaniels	2007	Literature review of research on the new faculty experience	Literature review	Socialisation, satisfaction, productivity
Boice	1987	50+ faculty at four different institutions	Observations, logs & statistical analysis of time and output	Release time does not improve productivity
Boice	1991	200-300+ faculty on three different campuses	Observations, logs and interviews	Productivity comes from balance and enjoyment
Elsewhere				
Nir & Zilberstein-Levy (Israel)	2006	10 pre-tenure and 6 tenured faculty in an Israeli university	In-depth interviews	Role stress and tenure
Gingras et al (Canada)	2008	6300+ Quebec academics' outputs 2000-2007	Statistical analysis of published outputs	Effect of age on research productivity
Jawitz (South Africa)	2009	31 academics in 3 departments in a South African university	Interviews	Social practice theory (Bourdieu) and situated learning theory (Lave & Wenger)
Jawitz (South Africa)	2007	4 academics in 1 department at a South African university	Interviews and document analysis	Situated cognition theory
Baruch (UK) & Hall (US)	2004	Literature review of management and academic careers	Literature review/reflective article	Academic career model

Appendix Two: Characteristics of Participants

University Participants

Pseudonym	Faculty	Sex	Success Criteria Achieved	Time in Academia
William	Science	M	Millions in external funding, institutional and national research awards, early promotion to Senior Lecturer	5
Heather	Science	F	Millions in external funding, institutional and national research awards, early promotion to Associate Professor	7+
Theresa	Social Science	F	Marsden funding, early career research excellence award, early promotion to Senior Lecturer	7+
Kevin	Commerce	M	Excellent teaching evaluations, early promotion to Senior Lecturer	7+
Michelle	Law	F	Early career research excellence award, early promotion to Senior Lecturer	6
Sydney	Law	F	Early career research excellence award, early promotion to Senior Lecturer	4
Bianca	Humanities	F	Marsden funding, excellent teaching evaluations	6
Dean	Humanities	M	Marsden funding, early promotion to Senior Lecturer	7+

Polytechnic Participants

Pseudonym	Faculty	Sex	Success Criteria Achieved	Time in Academia
Karen	Education	F	Early promotion	3
Lily	Education	F	Excellent teaching evaluations	5
Peter	Science	M	Excellent teaching evaluations	6
Chris	Science	M	Excellent teaching evaluations	4
Maree	Science	F	Excellent teaching evaluations	6
Janet	Social Science	F	Excellent teaching evaluations	5
Sue	Social Science	F	Excellent teaching evaluations, institutional teaching award	7+
Ingrid	Arts	F	External research funding, institutional research scholarship, excellent teaching evaluations and early promotion	6

Appendix Three: Interview Questions

1. Please describe why you chose to work at this institution
2. You've been described as a successful early career academic. Why do you think you've been described this way? And, why do you think you're successful?
3. What does success mean to you, personally, in terms of your academic career?

Teaching
4. Do you have a philosophy of teaching? If so, what is it? If not, are you are able to explain in a few sentences why you teach the way you do?
5. When do you do the majority of your teaching? During the year, week and day.
6. What does it mean to "do your teaching"? What does doing your teaching look like?
7. How confident are you as a teacher?
8. At what stage did you feel confident in carrying out your teaching role? (ie, straight away, it's taken years, after the first year, etc)
9. What support is available to you to do your teaching? Eg workshops, courses, peer observation, teaching conferences, etc. And what have you taken up personally?
10. What further support would you like around teaching?

Research
11. Do you have any research expectations as part of your job? If no, do you do research anyway? If yes, what percentage of your time is expected to be spent on research? What percentage of your time do you *actually* spend on research?
12. What does it mean to "do your research"? What does doing your research look like? What do you actually do?
13. How confident are you as a researcher?
14. At what stage did you feel confident in carrying out your research role? (ie, straight away, it's taken years, after the first year, etc)
15. What support is available to you to do your research? Eg workshops, conferences, study leave, conference funding, grants sessions, mentoring. And what have you taken up personally?
16. What further support would you like around research?
17. When do you do the majority of your writing for research? Where do you do the majority of your writing?
18. Personally, do you give a higher priority to research or teaching? Or both equally? How do you maintain the balance?

Support
19. What do you consider your strengths are as an academic?
20. How has the institution supported those strengths and rewarded you for your success at them?
21. How were you supported early in your employment here, to succeed/to move forward?
22. Did you experience any conflict between your expectations of the job and what you actually experienced? If so what, why?
23. What induction/orientation programmes were offered and what did you attend?
24. How useful were they to you? In what areas, specifically?
25. What kinds of informal support have you experienced or do you consider crucial to your success?
26. How aware were you early in your career of the processes for achieving promotion? When did you first apply? Successful first time? Help with putting together application?
27. Were you encouraged to map out/determine a career pathway early in your employment here? Have you been supported in such long term planning since?

Other Factors
28. What external factors, if any, have influenced your success? (eg family, industry, professional success/experience, friends, church, etc)
29. How do you fit everything in to your working week?
30. What impact has your success had on your students?
31. What does *student* success look like to you?
32. What influence do you have on Māori students in your role as an academic? Has your success at this institution had any measurable impact on Māori students in your classes or at your institution?

Appendix Four: Survey Questions

Demographics

1. In which year were you born?
2. What is your nationality?
3. If you were NOT born in New Zealand, how long have you lived in New Zealand?
4. What is your ethnicity?
5. What is your gender?

Job Information

6. What is your current job title?
7. How long have you been in your current academic position?
8. Have you been promoted at your current institution? If yes, please specify when you were promoted (month/year) and from which position.
9. How long have you worked as an academic in the tertiary sector (including at other tertiary institutions prior to your current job)?

Qualifications

10. What is your highest qualification?
11. Please list any other tertiary qualifications you think may be relevant

Your Home Situation

12. Please choose the statement below that best describes the current employment situation in your household/relationship.
13. How many children (under 18 years) live with you at home?
14. How many other dependents (for example, an adult who requires your care) live with you at home?

Research and Teaching Activity

15. Please indicate the number of research outputs you have for each publication type (from your entire academic career).
16. How many conferences (related to your academic work) have you attended in the last two years?
17. How many students are you currently supervising?
18. During term time (in a regular teaching term, not one in which you are on research leave) how many hours a week do you spend on the following activities? Research, Teaching, Supervision, Administration, Service (either to the institution or the community, but related to your role as an academic) (approx hrs/wk)
19. How often each day do you check your work email?
20. Did you have fewer teaching responsibilities, or receive "teaching relief", in your first year as an academic?
21. Have you been on sabbatical/research leave since starting your job at your current institution?

Institutional Policies/Support/Services for New Academics – Importance and Effectiveness

Please choose an answer from the drop down box that best reflects your response to each statement.

22. Formal orientation programme for new academics
23. Formal mentoring programme for new academics
24. Professional assistance for developing/improving teaching
25. Professional assistance in obtaining externally funded grants
26. Travels funds to present papers or conduct research
27. Information about criteria for promotion
28. Paid or unpaid research leave
29. Teaching relief in the early years of academic appointment
30. An upper limit on service obligations in the early years of appointment
31. Workload policy within department/faculty/college
32. Availability and accessibility of child care
33. Flexible working hours
34. Attractive/competitive salary and benefits
35. Opportunity to work from home/out of the office
36. Peer observation of teaching
37. Availability of resources for conducting research
38. Availability of resources for teaching
39. Opportunities to participate in decision-making processes
40. Rewards for good teaching

41. Rewards for good research

Working Relationships within your institution – Importance and Effectiveness

Please choose an answer from the drop down box that best reflects your response to each statement.

42. Good communication between management and academics
43. Feedback from manager/s about your academic performance
44. Support from Head of Department/manager to apply for promotion
45. A Head of Department/manager who is committed to your success
46. Senior colleagues who are interested in your progress and well-being
47. Opportunities to meet other new academics within the institution
48. Regular contact with senior colleagues in your department
49. Regular contact with senior colleagues in other disciplines
50. Support from departmental colleagues
51. Opportunities to meet with disciplinary colleagues beyond the institution

Work-life balance

52. I enjoy the challenges of my job
53. Work often takes priority over other activities
54. Family and friends comment on my high number of work hours
55. I seldom find time to relax
56. I am happy with the amount of time I spend with my family
57. I always use all my annual leave or time off
58. I control the role of work in my life
59. I can arrange my work to get enough physical exercise
60. I regularly find time for myself, eg to read for pleasure, pursue a hobby, go to a play or movie, etc

Final Questions

61. How long do you plan to remain at your institution?
62. If a candidate for an academic position asked you about your department as a place to work, would you: Strongly recommend your department as a place to work, Recommend your department with some reservations, Not recommend your department as a place to work
63. How would you rate your institution as a place to work?
64. If you could do it all over again, would you still embark upon an academic career?

Appendix Five: Additional Data Tables

Table One: Indicators of Success as Identified by Participants in Interviews

Indicators of Success (by theme)	% of Uni respondents (*n*=8)	% of Poly respondents (*n*=8)	% of all respondents (*n*=16)
Research			
Producing high quality, international research outputs	100	38	69
Gaining research awards/big research grants	88	25	56
Having a good reputation within the research discipline/community	88	25	56
Doing research that makes a difference to society	25	0	13
Getting a PG qualification while working	0	25	13
Personal satisfaction and balance			
Having passion for and enjoyment of the job	50	88	69
Getting promoted	100	25	63
Having good social and communication skills	63	38	50
Work-life balance	38	50	44
Growing personally	38	38	38
Surviving	25	38	31
Academic Citizenship			
Getting good feedback from colleagues/manager	38	75	56
Maintaining good relationships with staff & students	13	75	44
Being prepared	50	25	38
Demonstrating leadership	38	38	38
Being a willing, active department member	13	38	25
Managing other staff	13	25	19
Teaching			
Seeing students get positive results/succeed	13	50	31
Being recognised for good, quality teaching	38	25	31
Developing a reputable programme or course	13	38	25
Demonstrating care for students	0	50	25
Having real world experience to bring into classroom	0	50	25
Involvement in teaching programmes and/or supervision elsewhere	0	25	13

Table Two: Indicators of Success Identified by Participants – Ranked in Descending Order

Indicators of Success (ranked)	% of Uni respondents (*n*=8)	% of Poly respondents (*n*=8)	% of all respondents (*n*=16)
Producing high quality, international research outputs	100	38	69
Having passion for and enjoyment of the job	50	88	69
Getting promoted	100	25	63
Gaining research awards/big research grants	88	25	56
Having a good reputation within the discipline/community	88	25	56
Getting good feedback from colleagues/manager	38	75	56
Having good social and communication skills	63	38	50
Maintaining good relationships with staff & students	13	75	50
Work-life balance	38	50	44
Growing personally	38	38	38
Being prepared	50	25	38
Demonstrating leadership	38	38	38
Surviving	25	38	31
Seeing students get positive results/succeed	13	50	31
Developing a reputable programme or course	13	38	25
Being recognised for good, quality teaching	38	13	25
Demonstrating care for students	0	50	25
Being a willing, active department member	13	38	25
Having real world experience to bring into classroom	0	50	25
Managing other staff	13	25	19
Getting good student evaluations	13	25	19
Doing research that makes a difference to society	25	0	13
Getting a PG qualification while working	0	25	13
Involvement in teaching programmes/supervision elsewhere	0	25	13

Table Three: Contributors to Success

	% of Uni respondents (*n*=8)	% of Poly respondents (*n*=8)	% of all respondents (*n*=16)
Personal Characteristics			
Hard work	100	100	100
Self-motivation, focus, self-management	100	100	100
Proactive (in finding support & opportunities)	100	100	100
Confidence	75	88	81
Joy in the job/love of subject and/or teaching	63	75	69
Balancing work and home life	38	100	69
Knowing how and when to say no or stop	63	50	56
Being organised	63	38	50
Stubbornness, doggedness, persistence	50	38	44
Friendliness, approachability, caring attitude	50	38	44
Being learners themselves	0	63	31
Making sacrifices	38	13	25
Resilience	38	13	25
Relational Agency and Academic Citizenship			
Good relationships externally	88	88	88
Good relationships with students and staff	63	100	81
Willingness to help others	88	63	75
Good external mentor/co-researcher	88	63	75
Peer support	75	63	69
Family/partner support	63	63	63
Not having any dependents	25	88	56
Co-teaching	50	63	56
Not having a spouse or partner	38	25	31
Friends	13	38	25
Having children	38	0	19
Institutional Influences			
Supportive manager	100	38	69
ADU support or involvement	75	63	69
Internal mentoring system and/or support	50	63	56
Peer observation of teaching	13	88	50
Time allowed for research	100	0	50
Meeting others at institution-wide events	38	38	38
Funds for travel	50	0	25
RPL for Certificate in Adult Education	0	50	25
Regular lunches that offer conversation & support	0	38	19
Reduced teaching load	38	0	19
Equipment or funding for research	38	0	19
Prior Experiences			
Prior teaching experience	38	75	56
Good graduate school experiences	50	38	44
Real world experience	13	25	19

Table Four: Contributors to Success (Ranked)

	% of Uni respondents (*n*=8)	% of Poly respondents (*n*=8)	% of all respondents (*n*=16)
Hard work	100	100	100
Self-motivation, focus, self-management	100	100	100
Proactive (in finding support and opportunities)	100	100	100
Good relationships externally	88	88	88
Confidence	75	88	81
Good relationships with staff and students	63	100	81
Willingness to help others	88	63	75
Good external mentor/co-researcher	88	63	75
Balancing work and home life	38	100	69
Joy in the job/love of subject and/or teaching	63	75	69
Peer support	75	63	69
Supportive manager	100	38	69
ADU support or involvement	75	63	69
Family/partner support	63	63	63
Knowing how and when to say no or stop	63	50	56
Not having any dependents	25	88	56
Co-teaching	50	63	56
Internal mentoring system and/or support	50	63	56
Prior teaching experience	38	75	56
Being organised	63	38	50
Time allowed for research	100	0	50
Peer observation of teaching	0	88	44
Stubbornness, doggedness, persistence	50	38	44
Friendliness, approachability, caring attitude	50	38	44
Good graduate school experiences	50	38	44
Meeting others at ADU events	38	38	38
Reduced teaching load	38	25	31
Being learners themselves	0	63	31
Not having a partner	38	25	31
Resilience	38	13	25
Friends	13	38	25
Funding for travel	50	0	25
Making sacrifices	38	13	25
RPL for Certificate in Adult Education	0	50	25
Equipment or funding for research	50	0	25
Lunches	0	38	19
Having children	38	0	19
Real world experience	13	25	19

Table Five: Barriers to Success

	% of Uni respondents (*n*=8)	% of Poly respondents (*n*=8)	% of respondents (*n*=16)
Institutional			
Lack of advice re: promotion, career planning, etc	75	100	88
Orientation/induction not timely or specific enough	100	50	75
Bureaucratic requirements	50	38	44
Funding for international travel for research	50	25	38
Information overload at the start	38	25	31
Lack of management support	13	38	25
Constant PBRF pressure	38	0	19
Being a manager in reality but not formally	13	25	19
Time			
Balancing teaching and research	88	38	63
Time for research	50	50	50
Time for teaching preparation	63	25	44
Time for professional development	50	25	38
Balancing need for international research outputs with time for local community involvement	13	25	19
Collegiality			
Doing too much and carrying the weight of other department members	50	50	50
Competitive, individualistic culture, lack of collegiality	63	0	31
Lack of research mentoring, support, guidance, peer review	25	13	19
More talk about teaching needed	25	13	19
Naïve expectations of academic life, esp re: collegiality	38	0	19
No support for interdisciplinary networks	25	0	13

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