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**Abstract**

The Australian academic profession is more differentiated than is acknowledged in national and institutional policies and academic roles are more diverse than many academics themselves may recognise. However, the evolution of the nature and purposes of the profession and its implicit diversification have been incremental and largely unplanned. A consequence of this piecemeal approach is the attitudes and pressures on academic staff uncovered by this study, including a widespread intent to leave the Australian higher education sector for other work, or work in overseas universities. The study is based on a large-scale survey of over 5,500 academics across 19 Australian universities, and explores the attitudes, motivators and career plans of the present academic workforce in Australia. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Bexley, Emmaline, E-Mail: bexleye@unimelb.edu.au