

Universities, Diasporic Academics and Global Knowledge Networks

ISANA

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Context

- Half of NZ's early career academics were born overseas (Sutherland 2012)
- NZ has the largest high skill diaspora (per capita) in the world
- Underlined by our (far-sighted!) policy of subsidising foreign doctoral candidates at domestic levels
- Academic labour markets link NZ ever more deeply into global knowledge networks

Diaspora Strategies

- KEA Network (<https://www.keanewzealand.com/>)
- Australia, Canada, Scotland, Jamaica, India, China
- Rather than ‘brain drain’ or ‘brain gain’, focus is on ‘brain circulation’
- Identify and engage offshore citizens in order to advance economic development and innovation policies
- Universities have also begun to identify academics with multiple national affiliations in order to advance internationalisation as an institutional priority

Diasporic Academics

- US universities should ‘develop strategies to facilitate collaboration between foreign researchers who choose to stay in the United States and local scientists in their home country’ (Anand et al. 2009)
- ‘Governments and Institutions should create formal links with academic talent within their own Diasporas to create brain circulation’ (IAU 2012)
- ‘Global research networks’ a key future trend for higher education (UUK 2015)

Globalising Researchers

- University is at the heart of wider professional, scientific and technical diaspora
- Number of doctorates held by the diaspora twice that of the equivalent population at home
- Many international students stay overseas after they graduate (perhaps as many as 50% (Rizvi, 2005))
- Global mobility of researchers is steadily increasing (average of 12% foreign nationals across Commonwealth universities)

Globalising Labour Markets

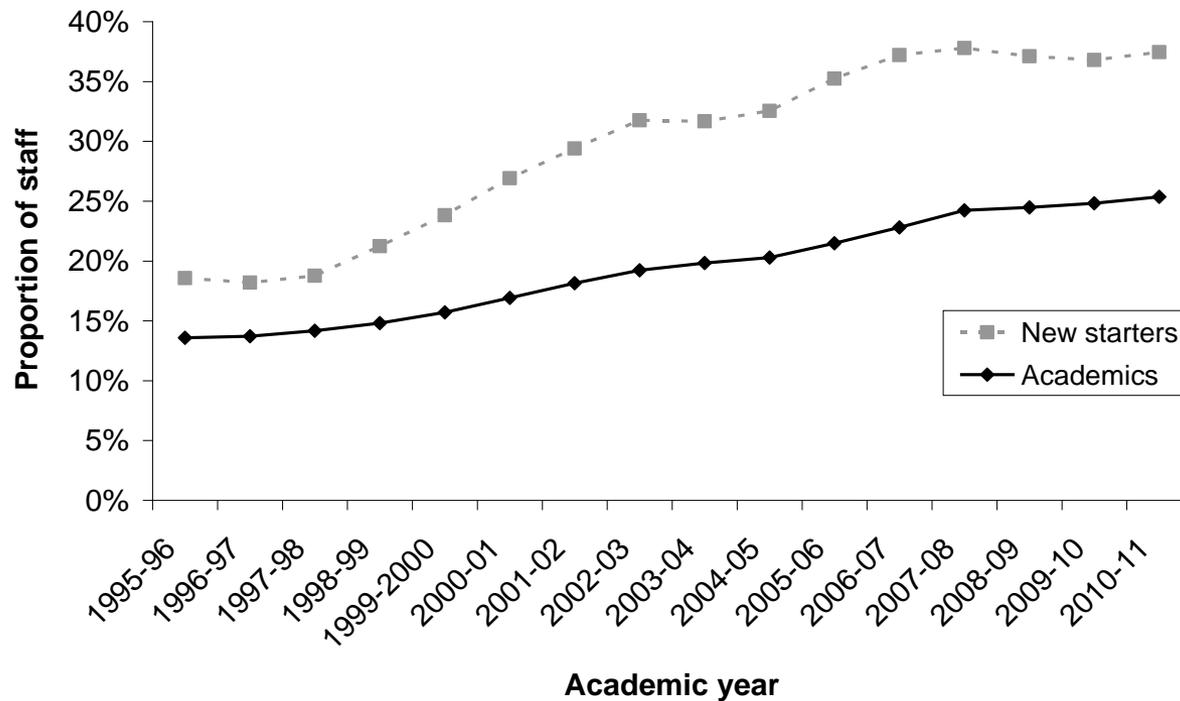
Proportion of academic staff who have a non-UK nationality by job group

Job group	% of non-UK nationals		% difference
	2008-09	2010-11	2008-09 to 2010-11
Professors	16%	17%	1%
Senior academics	16%	18%	2%
Academics	23%	25%	2%
Assistant academics	37%	36%	-2%
Total	24%	25%	1%

Notes: Pop AC.

Source: HEFEC 2012

Proportion of non-UK nationality staff comparing academics with academic new starters



Source: HEFCE 2012

Percentage of UK and non-UK academic staff in terms of teaching, research and teaching and research

	% of UK Academic Staff			% of non-UK Academic Staff		
	Only Teaching	Only Research	Teaching & Research	Only Teaching	Only Research	Teaching & Research
2012/13	78.89	56.25	75.56	17.51	41.64	22.83
2011/12	80.25	56.95	76.65	17.38	40.79	21.57
2010/11	79.84	56.63	77.04	17.07	40.53	20.42
2009/10	80.32	56.62	77.86	15.82	40.61	19.69
2008/09	78.92	56.88	78.04	14.70	40.57	18.94
2007/08	77.20	56.55	79.08	14.76	39.67	18.37
2006/07	78.00	57.77	80.21	13.38	37.84	17.18
2005/06	76.32	59.60	81.24	12.63	35.31	15.96
2004/05	75.88	61.71	82.51	11.69	33.83	14.90

Source: HEIDI database

International Career Paths

- Postgraduate initiatives
- Emphasis on international visibility and impact
- Government programmes designed to recruit leading researchers (Canadian Research Chairs, ARC Future Fellows, NZ Entrepreneurial Universities)
- Emergence of a global academic elite, rotating between leading institutions

Globalising Universities

- Transnational Research Opportunities
- Growth of international research consortia
- Bi-lateral 'deep partnerships'
- Disciplinary networks
- PhD partnering programmes
- Scholar exchange schemes

Global Challenges

- Inter-institutional, interdisciplinary, international teams
- Rise of problem based approaches based on local needs and priorities
- Blurring of industrial/scientific/governmental complexes
- Research and public missions seen in a global context (Victoria as a global-civic university)

Diasporic Academics as Knowledge Brokers

- ‘Diaspora effect’ in scientific collaborations
- Experiential understandings, linguistic skills and cultural nuance of ‘insider accounts’
- ‘Lonely bilingual scholars’ who have returned home but feel out of place
- Brokering of international relationships through embodied transnational networks

Institutionalising Academic Diasporas

- Co-publication strategies
- International advisory boards, scholarly translations, out reach activities
- Pro-active soliciting of knowledge and relationships
- Increasingly sophisticated research software packages
- Mapping of international networks

Intellectual Contributions

- Universities can create and maintain an environment and culture that understands the value of global health research, the advantages of diversity, the intellectual contributions made by diasporic scientists, and the unique role these scientists can play on catalyzing partnerships with their home countries (Anand et al., 2009:532).

Brokering Knowledge Networks

- The biggest challenge facing the development community and education systems worldwide, particularly in less developed regions, is how to organise and produce knowledge and professionals who have the capability to forge links across disciplines, to bridge the divide between the natural and social sciences and to mobilise and integrate knowledge from diverse sources into the development agenda (Obamba, 2013:129).

Towards Mutual Benefits

- Overcoming the challenge of ‘developmentalist’ approaches and exploitative relationships
- Need for more symmetrical, sustainable and equitable mechanisms
- Cultivating of ‘intellectually generous’ research exchanges

Conclusions

- New premium on academics with multiple national affiliations
- These affiliations are being leveraged both individually and institutionally
- New questions as diasporic experiences become more common
 - Gender? Culture? Geography?
 - Different kinds of mobility?
 - Disciplinary distinctions?
- Diasporic academics are seen as having the ability to deliver on new institutional aspirations for internationalisation