

Contingent labour force in Australian higher education

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Structure of Presentation

- Acknowledgements
- Some definitions
- A data dump
- An analysis
- My “logical” extrapolation
- Discussion

Acknowledgements

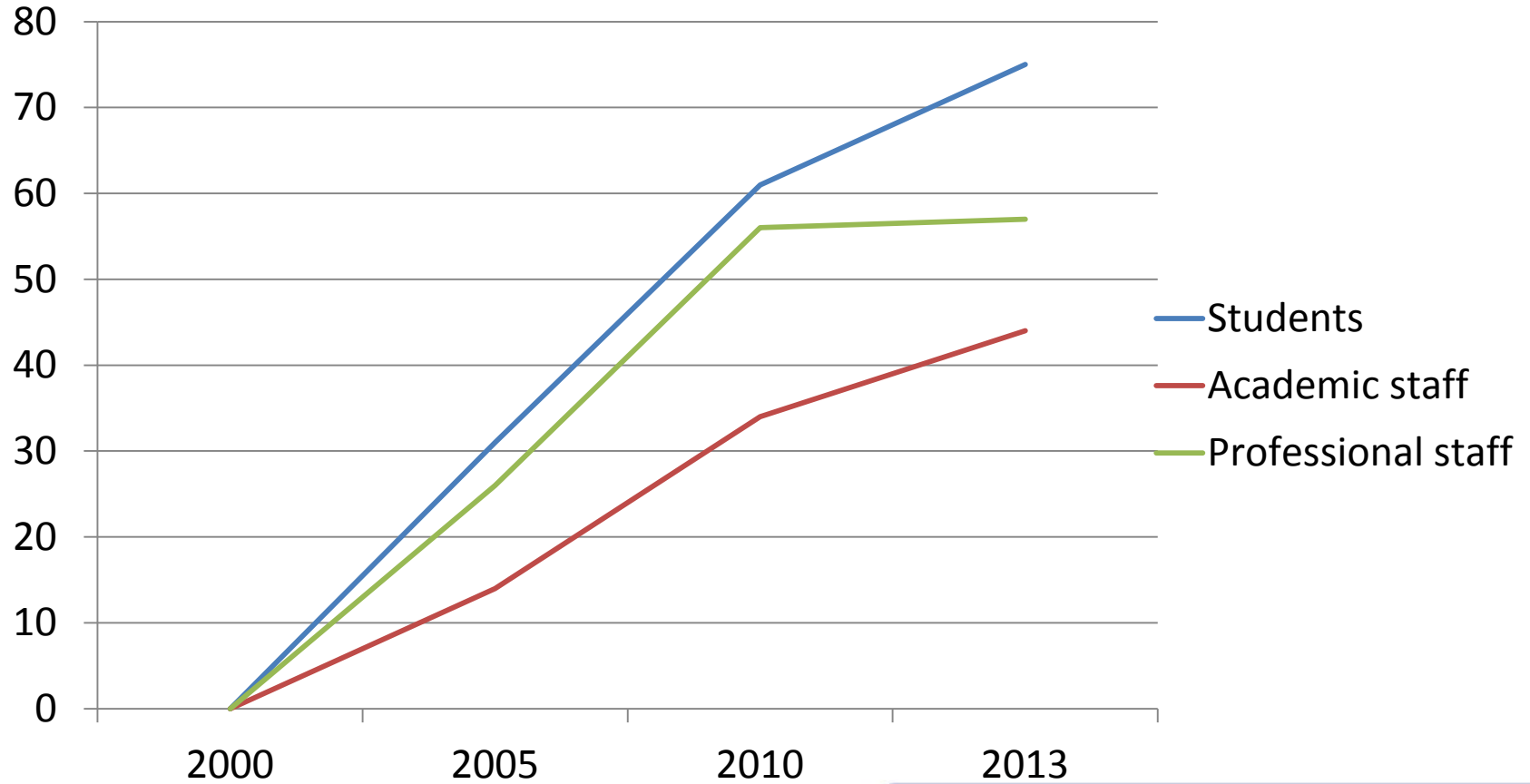
- The resultant of a joint AHEIA-LHMI project
- Report presented at October conference in Vancouver: FBS-Canada, UCEA-UK, AHEIA-Oz
- Contributors:
 - AHEIA: Stuart Andrews, Catherine Pugsley, Bianca Rance;
 - LH Martin: Liz Baré, Peter Bentley, Leo G.

Australian definitions

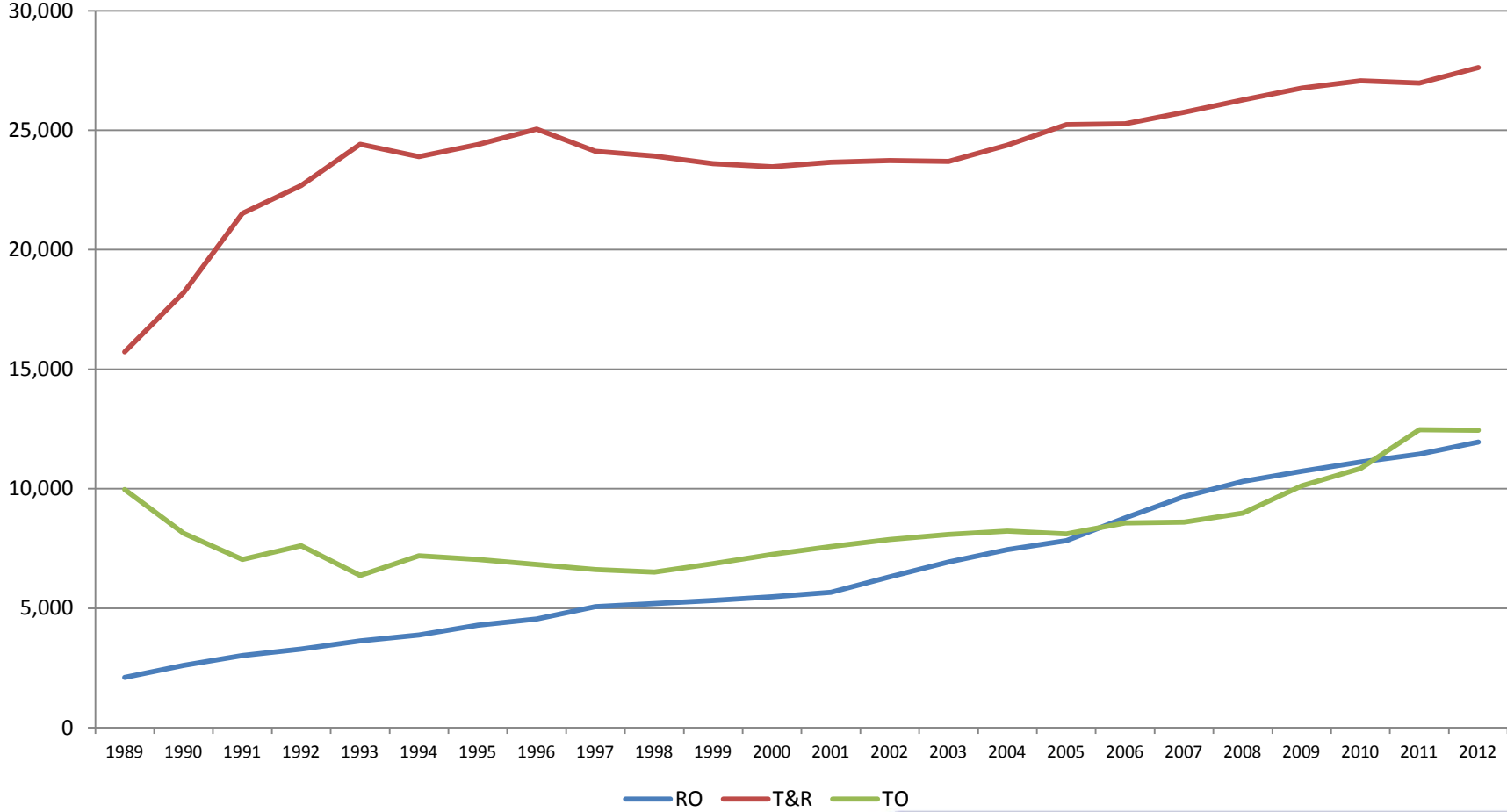
- **Casual** Engagement “by the hour”. Rates derived from full-time academic rates, with a loading of 25% on base rate to compensate for loss of conditions.
- **Sessional employment** Casuals engaged for a defined number of hours over a specified time frame and paid regularly over that time frame
- **Fixed term** Employment for a specified task or time with a defined end point. Fixed term contracts may only be used for
 - Specified task or project (which includes work funded by external source)
 - Research
 - Replacement employee
 - Recent professional practice required
 - Pre-retirement contract (maximum 5 years)
 - Subsidiary to studentship
 - Some exceptions in individual enterprise agreements.

Percentage increase in student and EFT staff numbers 2000 -2013

Australian public universities

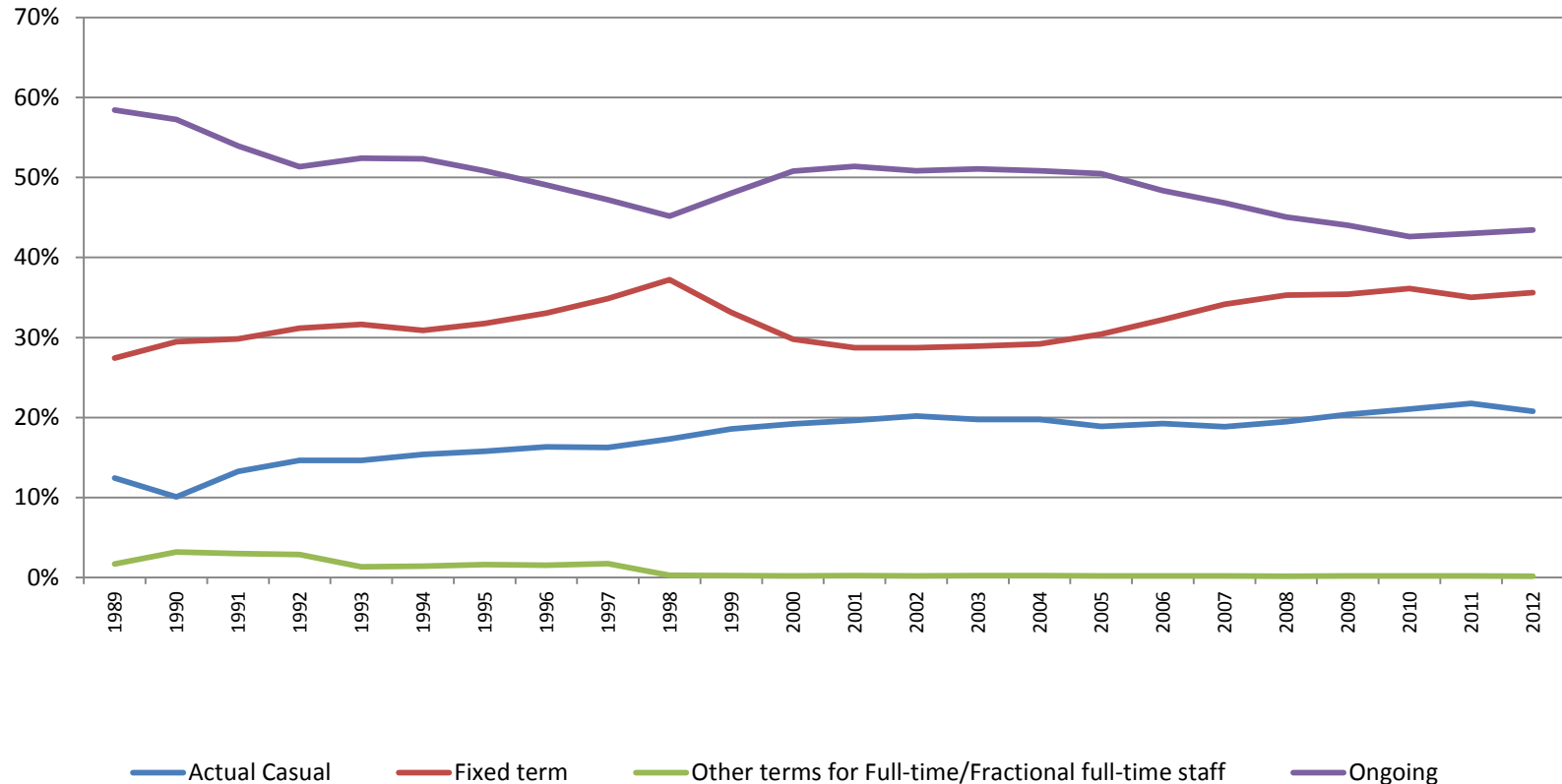


FTE Academic Staff by Function

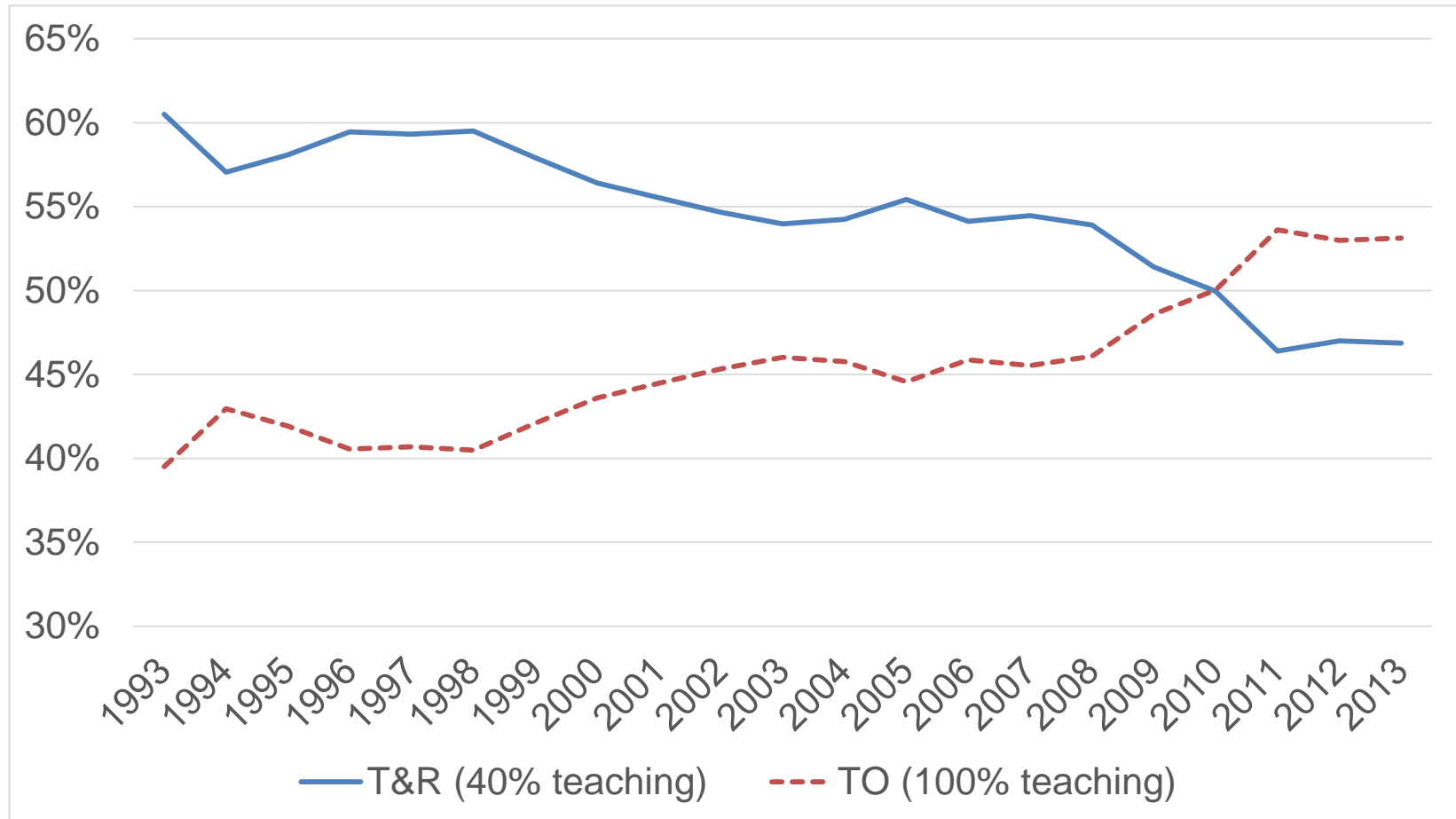


Growth in the incidence of contingent academic employment 1989 – 2012

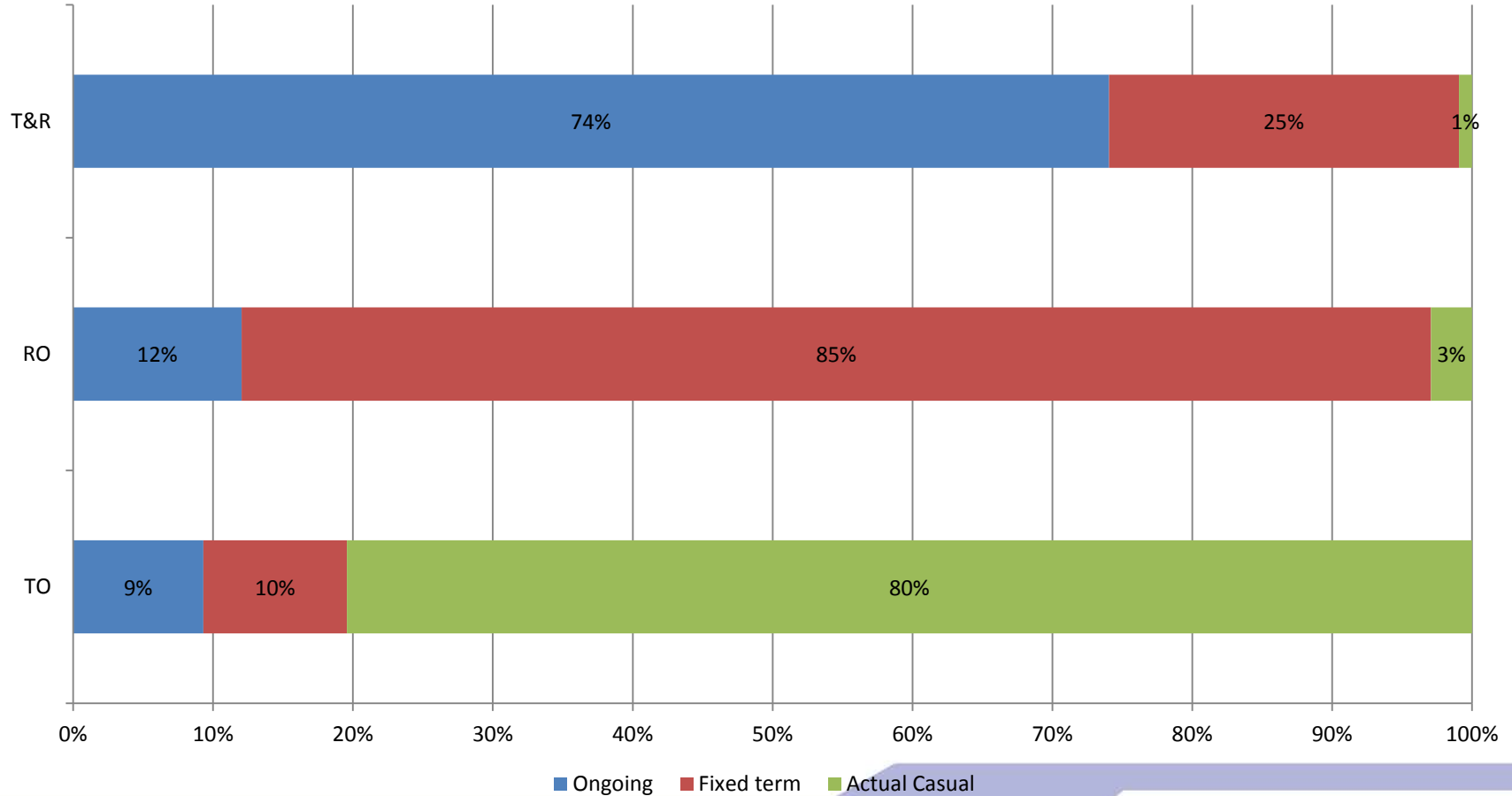
Australian public universities



Share of FTE teaching by role

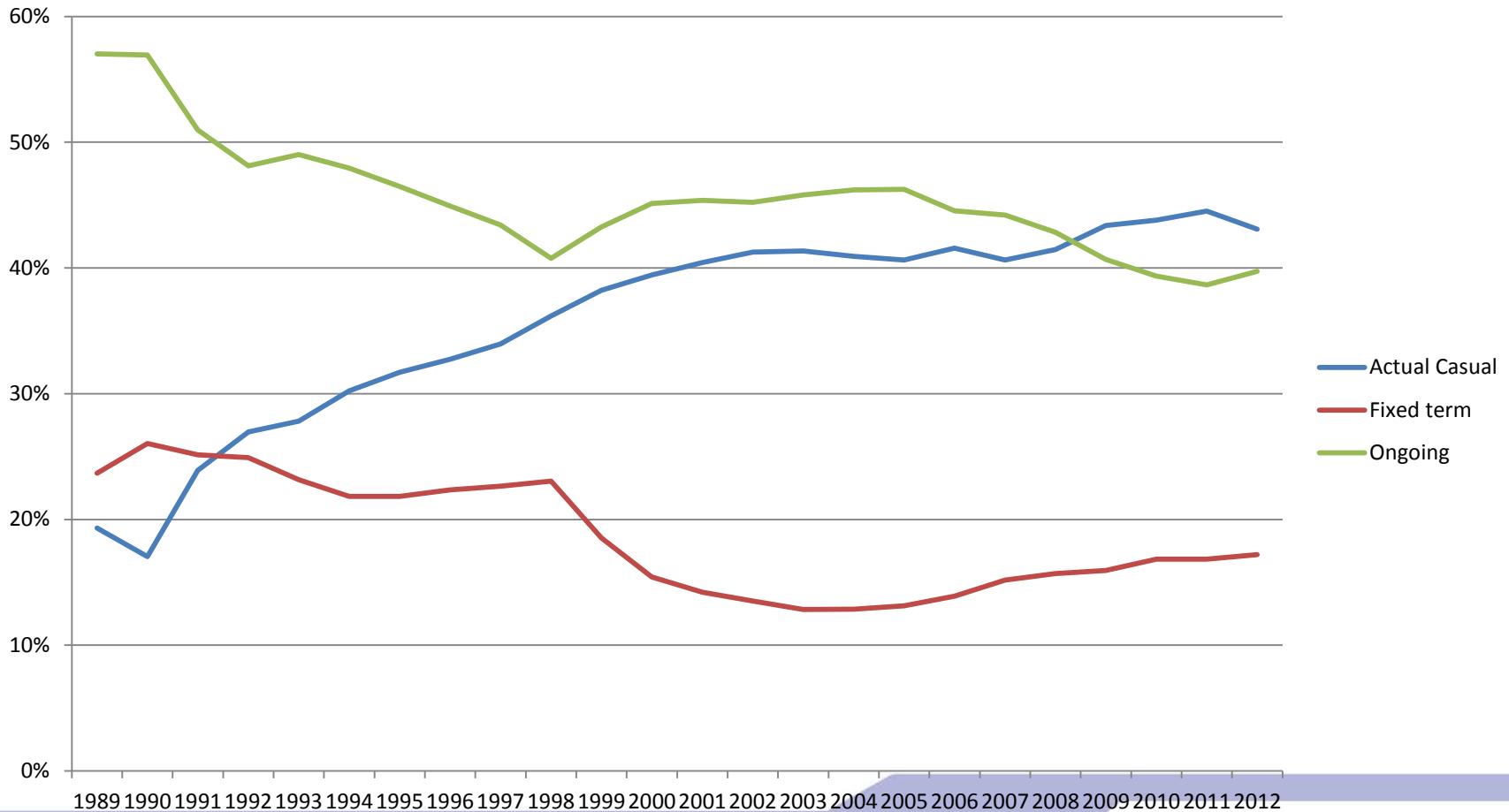


Staff-Uni relationship 2012



Growth in incidence of teaching by casual staff 1989 – 2012

Australian public universities



An initial assessment of the contingent workforce



- Unknown impact on quality of education
- More casual academic staff than continuing academic staff (but absolute numbers not known)
- Type, mix and qualifications of casual staff not known
- Perception of exploitation and gender inequity
- Impact on the future of the academic workforce
- Administrative and supervisory costs
- Focus of NTEU industrial strategy

The common arguments

- Ease of engagement and termination
- Risk management in uncertain times
- Lower cost
- Flexible to meet emerging circumstances
- Inevitable to support some forms of professional education
- Casual work suits some people, but not all



University strategies

- Fixed term employment inevitable consequence of research grant system
- Casual employment risk management and cost reduction strategy
- Variations in conditions determined at University level in line with institutional strategies
 - Generally provide (and mandate) training for casual staff new to teaching
 - A few provide enhanced conditions for casuals, eg paid maternity leave
 - Some agree to Teaching Only or Early career positions open to existing casuals and fixed term staff
 - Some negotiated contingent continuing contracts for research only staff.



But...

- Does the underlying employment structure make high levels of casual employment inevitable?
 - HECE Award (continued in EBAs) limits fixed term contracts for teaching and legitimates casual work
- Are we creating a two-speed economy within?
 - The Champions League: Matthew Effect
 - The Rest: managing the casual labour force
- A series of perverse drivers
 - Research, research and research
 - Student numbers
 - Career prospects
- Sustainable in the face of increased competition
 - Private providers, possible deregulation??

Some musings

- Career expectations from our younger staff
- Talent management
- Contributions to mission
 - Match expectations and interests to work profiles
 - Short-term policy is not going to work
- Promotion policy
- Accept and embrace diversity
- Productivity, productivity, productivity