

GILE Journal of Skills Development

What the Literature Tells Us About the Transition of Second-Career Academics Into Higher Education

Ian Fellows

Canterbury Christ Church University, UK

 ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-6754-3160>

Abstract

With the growth and evolution of the higher education sector in recent decades, universities have drawn on more diverse sources from which to recruit academic staff. One such route is for universities to recruit professionals from non-academic backgrounds to teach and research. The transition of career professionals becoming second-career academics is a growing phenomenon, but one that is under-researched in the literature. This paper summarises the findings in the literature on this topic from the last twenty-five years, drawing on forty-four academic articles. Common themes are discussed and presented in a chronological format from the decision-making process prior to transitioning, through the challenges and opportunities commonly experienced by second-career academics making the transition, concluding with a summary of the recommendations presented in the research. In the discussion section that follows, the author draws on their own experience as a second-career academic to summarise pertinent points and offer an additional perspective on the recommendations offered in the literature. The purpose of this article is to offer a summary of what is currently understood in the literature with a view to supporting further research into the transition of second-career academics as an important skills development issue for the higher education sector. The review finds that several recommendations are common in the literature (mentoring schemes, development of academic skills and agency, introduction of reference materials and cultural change) and the viability of these is discussed before recommendations are made for individuals considering transitioning to a career in academia.

Keywords/key phrases: second-career academic, pracademic, scholar-practitioner, professional skills, career transitions

1. Introduction

Given the significant growth in the higher education sector in recent decades, demand for new entrants as academics, administrators, and student support staff continues to grow (Waller et al., 2020). Traditionally, most academics in higher education followed a relatively straightforward career path from undergraduate student to graduate researcher to junior academic and then through the academic ranks. However, as demand for academics has increased, the number of lecturers drawn from other sources has grown (Griffiths & Dickinson, 2023) and is likely to continue to rise (Ong, 2022).

The transition of professionals from other sectors to academic roles in higher education is not new but is relatively under-researched in the literature (Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020; Wilson et al., 2014a). At the same time, these career transitioners are an interesting phenomenon related to the massification of higher education in recent decades (Griffiths & Dickinson, 2021). The literature describes professionals transitioning into the sector in several ways. Terms such as pracademic (Bains, 2024), second career academic (Ong, 2022), practitioner-turned-academic (Pickern & Costakis, 2023), practitioner-academic (Wilson et al., 2014b), transitioned academics (Bandow et al., 2007), dual professional (Griffiths & Dickinson, 2021), practitioner-researcher (Ragland, 2006), developing academics (Wakely, 2021), and scholar-practitioner (Kormanlik et al., 2009) have all been used to describe this group of educators. None of these terms are without flaws as a description. This paper will not use the term pracademic despite its being the most common descriptor in the literature, since, as Dickfos (2019, p.244) indicates, pracademic is not a specific description but instead, "the term has been used more broadly, to refer to a blend of the practical with the academic (Owens, 2016) or to describe a teaching style that focuses on the practical application of academic theory and knowledge (McDonald & Mooney, 2011)". Instead, this paper will use the less ambiguous term second-career academics, acknowledging that this may not necessarily be an individual's second career and that the discussed publications may use different terminology.

In this paper, a second-career academic is a person who has established a successful career in a different industry and makes a conscious decision to establish themselves in an academic role in higher education. This paper will not distinguish between second-career academics who transition entirely from their previous career and those who continue their previous professional practice alongside their academic responsibilities.

Second-career academics contribute to the academic experience of students in different and complementary ways to traditional academics, broadening the curriculum, incorporating pragmatic pedagogic approaches, and enriching the scholarship. The directly relevant professional experience with which second-career academics supplement the teaching of academic theory supports the skills development and practical understanding of students and serves to enhance their capability to successfully negotiate the labour market upon graduation. In addition to which, the challenging transition experienced by second-career academics that this paper will outline bears many similarities to the transition from study to employment that students face, allowing for the delivery of more empathetic and better-informed student support. In these ways, the presence of second-career academics in the higher education sector offers students a richer and more varied educational experience.

This paper will begin with a concise explanation of the methods utilised to identify relevant papers for inclusion in the review process and the methodological drivers behind the decision-making process. An overview of the findings from forty-four academic papers will follow, with common themes identified and areas of incongruity explained. The presentation of these themes will follow a narrative format that traces the transitional journey of second-career academics from their initial decision to their establishment as academics.

2. Method and Methodology

This paper reviews forty-four academic papers published since 1999, when Volpe and Chandler first coined the term 'pracademic'. It will identify common themes, highlight anomalies where they exist, and offer a cohesive summary of the findings and recommendations presented in the literature. This paper is not presented as being comprehensive or definitive, although the author intended to review the literature as thoroughly as possible. The author identified relevant source materials in two ways: firstly, by way of searching three large-scale academic repositories

(Google Scholar, ResearchGate, and Academia), and secondly, by reading relevant papers cited by publications identified by the first mechanism. To protect the salience and relevance of this paper as the conditions of the higher education sector have significantly changed during the current century, where possible the author chose to exclude publications from the review from more than twenty-five years ago, other than to mention two seminal papers (Boyer, 1996; Lieberman, 1992) which are cited prominently in the literature under review. This review includes several papers by authors discussing their original research in multiple publications (Wilson et al., Gourlay, and Kitchener).

The author of this paper is a second-career academic and, as such, has conducted this literature review as part of a broader autoethnographic reflection on their own transition. This research followed conversations on transition journeys between the author and fellow second-career academic colleagues as part of a collaborative paper on their experiences working in the third space (Whitchurch, 2008) between academia and professional services (Anonymised citation, 2024). Reviewing the literature on "the move into a different role (academic), a different set of skills (teaching, research and service), a different sector as well as into a different organisational culture... that, arguably, has 'many different quirks'" (Kitchener, 2023; p.11) allowed the author to critically evaluate and make sense of the events in their own life. The author's situation necessarily means that this paper may not be wholly objective and is instead intended as a phenomenological reading of the literature (Hammersley, 2012) in which the author has attempted to 'bracket' their preconceptions and personal experiences to allow the literature to speak for themselves rather than foregrounding works that they find particularly familiar, resonant, or comforting.

In keeping with the chosen methodological approach of allowing the literature to speak for itself, a conventional thematic analysis was undertaken (Braun & Clarke, 2017) utilising the coding of each text in sequence. The codes assigned to each text were categorised to allow recurrent themes to be identified and subjected to further analysis (Miles et al., 2019). The iterative coding, categorisation, and thematic analysis process was manually completed by the author alone as a means of ensuring a consistent and comprehensive reading of the texts (Silverman, 2015). While manual analysis naturally introduces the potential for researcher bias, a strict adherence to phenomenological principles mitigates this as far as possible. While this analytical process has the potential to produce qualitative data, no qualitative analysis was undertaken and this potential limitation of the research offers an opportunity for further, complementary analyses in the future.

Given the vague and sometimes overlapping definitions of second-career academics in the literature, this review considers several publications which also discuss other non-traditional academic roles and, in any instances where a publication does not speak directly about second-career academics, it is indicated.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Introduction

The phenomenon of professionals transitioning into higher education and undertaking a second career as an academic is such a significant life event that it has much in common with transnational migration (Wilson et al., 2014a). For the second career academic, the inter-professional transition can result in feelings of culture shock (Wilson et al., 2014a) and require

a significant adjustment period to their new career. Bandow et al. (2007) make the point that existing support structures in higher education were designed for recruits following "the traditional linear transition through university, higher-degree research and on into academia" (Wilson et al., 2014a; p.7), hereafter referred to as traditional academics, and may not be appropriate for second-career academics. Wakely (2021) suggests it may take up to three years for a second-career academic to settle into their new role, even in practice-based disciplines. Despite the significance of this transition and the potential risk it poses for higher education institutions with significant incentives to retain their newly recruited workforce (Mohandas, 2023), there are still significant barriers for the second-career academic to overcome (Wilson et al., 2014b), some of which are outlined in the sections that follow. The reality is that the transition of second-career academics is under-researched (Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020) but the research which does exist overwhelmingly depicts a sector failing to adequately support those transitioning individuals (Kitchener, 2023). This situation should be a matter of concern for anyone in the effectiveness of teaching and learning in the higher education sector and the development of its students. This literature review aims to consolidate current knowledge to support future research.

3.2. Prior to Transitioning

According to the literature, the motivation for transitioning into an academic role for career professionals is a combination of dissatisfaction with the professional career in which second-career academics were previously working and perceptions of what an academic career would entail that were not always accurate or well-informed. This review will consider the push and pull factors that inform the decision-making process for professionals who choose to transition to a career in higher education.

Among the reasons identified by the participants of a study conducted by Wilson et al. (2014b) were limited career choices in their previous profession, an unsupportive workplace, and limited work/life balance. In the case studies provided by Crowder and Mouratidou (2022), seeking a better work/life balance was also one of the critical motivations related to dissatisfaction with a previous career. Leonard et al. (2023) found a range of reasons that motivate accountants to transition to a career in higher education, including negative experiences in their corporate careers and limited career opportunities in their previous role. Jensen et al. (2006; p.4) found that "the corporate experience was not as fulfilling over time, and they each had felt increased pressure and stress at work". Similarly, as Knittel Mabry et al. (2004) found, feelings of corporate burnout and the desire to escape to a different kind of career and life demonstrate that the push and pull factors in a person's decision to transition their career often overlap and inform one another. This analysis supports Wilson et al.'s comparison with transnational migrants "motivated by a complex array of push/pull factors, which may or may not involve a degree of uncertainty and excitement when crossing the respective geosymbolic boundaries" (2014a; p.8).

Compared to the push factors, the pull of a career in academia, as outlined in the literature, is less grounded in extrinsic practicalities and comes from a more intrinsic place rooted in values and aspirations. Pickern & Costasis (2023) state that the most common reason is a desire to teach, but among the three works that they cite in support of this, Crowder and Mouratidou (2020) describe this as a calling that encompasses both a desire to teach and to make a meaningful social contribution. Wilson et al. state that "the motives for making the move to academe usually centre on lifestyle and prestige factors" (2014a; p.8). These alternative

explanations do not contradict Pickern and Costasis's assertion but make the point that the 'desire to teach' is more nuanced than a desire to impart knowledge for its own sake.

Many second-career academics saw academia as a career with a more appealing lifestyle encompassing flexibility (Leonard et al., 2023), prestige (Wilson et al., 2014a), and a new challenge (Gourlay, 2011a). For other research participants, their motivation was to positively transform lives (Jensen et al., 2006), to pursue their interests more thoroughly (Myers et al., 2006), or to remedy a poorly made initial career choice (Bandow et al., 2007).

An infrequent but significant theme in the literature is what Crowder and Mouratidou (2020) called serendipity. Rather than being a careerist calculation (Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004), some second-career academics found themselves in a position where they had an opportunity to make the transition, and this inspired them to consider doing so (Leonard et al., 2023; Laari, 2022; Knittel Mabry et al., 2004). This opportunity may be more appealing and available to industry professionals with a higher level of prior education who may experience their career change as a return rather than a transition (Bandow et al., 2007; Owen & Flynn, 2004). Second-career academics with a higher level of prior education may be more attuned to the 'quirks' of higher education (Simendinger et al., 2000) and better prepared to make an informed decision to transition having been 'socialised' in a similar way to academics who have taken a more traditional path (Wakely, 2021), thus enhancing confidence and facilitating an additional motivation to transition.

3.3. Entering the Academy

Participants in the research literature report that transitioning to academia has required them to accept a salary reduction (Leonard et al., 2023; Wilson et al., 2014a; Jensen et al., 2006), although for some, their initial preconceptions were that the field is generously remunerated (Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020). A common theme in the literature is that professionals have inaccurate perceptions of academia as a lucrative and comparatively easy career (Pickern & Costakis, 2023).

The research participants' mistaken preconceptions about the higher education sector are also evident in the literature in form of a previous disdain for academic theory as being separate from 'the real world' (Dickinson et al., 2022) and more broadly of 'ivory tower' academics themselves (Grafström et al., 2023). These preconceptions are reciprocated in turn by academics who view industry professionals as inferior or ill-deserving of a place in academia, a point starkly made by one of the participants in Ombebe's study: "When I applied for a senior role, I was openly informed by a colleague that he had applied to stop me, a non-researcher, getting the role. He also said there had been a discussion 'amongst the researchers' as to who should stand against me to have a better chance of success" (2023; p.6).

This perceived dichotomy between theory and practice is a recurrent theme in the literature (Grafström et al., 2023; Dickinson et al., 2022; Hollweck et al., 2021; Bartunek & Rynes, 2014; Bansal et al., 2012) as a contributory factor to the challenges second-career academics face in transitioning to higher education. Some researchers have postulated that, at least in part, the perpetuation of and, as in the example above, the vehemence with which this divide is adhered to by academics relates to broader concerns about the malign influence of neoliberalism on higher education (Kitchener, 2023; Dickinson et al., 2022; Kolber & Heggart, 2021). While some have called for educators to move beyond rhetorical resistance and deal with the realities

of higher education as they are (Fellows, 2023; Pal, 2022), the literature demonstrates that these issues persist for professionals entering the higher education sector.

In 1992, Lieberman postulated the role of 'boundary spanners' or 'linkers' in bridging the gap between practice and theory, and this neatly summarises both the strengths that a second-career academic can bring and the challenges they will face. Posner identified that 'boundary protection' is used "to establish and institutionalise professional fields in both academic and bureaucratic worlds" (2009; p.19), and Wilson et al. speculate that this may explain the "implicit, unofficial strategy which obliges newly transitioned academics to 'sink or swim' when learning the administrative and institutional ropes" (2014a; p.10). A participant in Jensen et al.'s 2006 study used the same sink or swim metaphor ("In teaching, you are just thrown in, sink or swim; you feel you are on your own and there is less classroom support than expected" (p.5)) and Obembe's 2023 research ("I was dumped into teaching with no experience and limited support, just two weeks after I had started - it was a case of sink or swim" (p.7)) suggesting that the challenge is long-standing, common, and ongoing.

An essential aspect of academia's 'boundary protection' found in the literature is the inadequacy (and sometimes absence) of rudimentary support for new academics from a professional background. Academics who have followed a more traditional pathway of postgraduate study and socialisation within the scholarly community (Barnacle & Mewburn, 2010) face markedly fewer barriers than those experienced by second-career academics. Bandow et al. (2007; p.23) argue that "there are support structures ... these structures seek to meet the needs of very young faculty members who have often just left graduate school and who have yet to acquire significant work experience... For the older faculty member who has transitioned from industry, the traditional support system is likely to be inadequate." In a sector that seems "to have issues with onboarding and retention of staff across the board" (Pickern & Costakis, 2023; p.2), being part of a cohort for whom universities leave to 'sink or swim' is problematic.

The personal toll of an unsupported transition on second-career academics is made explicitly clear in the literature, including feelings of anxiety and unworthiness (Gourlay, 2011b), alienation (Herman et al., 2021), incompetence (Dickinson et al., 2022), imposter syndrome (Griffiths & Dickinson, 2023), feeling unwelcomed and unwanted (Pickern & Costakis, 2023), feelings of inauthenticity, uncertainty, and insecurity (Wakely, 2021), and notable levels of stress (Thornton, 2010). Wilson et al. (2014b) identify that second-career academics' inaccurate preconceptions about the sector as collegial, welcoming, supportive, and appreciative of the value of practitioner experience may exacerbate these negative experiences.

3.4. Becoming an Academic

For those professionals who do not "return to the industry within mere weeks of appointment" (Pickern & Costakis, 2023; p. 2), the challenging experience of transition can have a significant negative impact on their professional confidence (Wakely, 2021; Gourlay, 2011b; Blenkinsopp & Stalker, 2004). Second-career academics who experience negative transitional experiences may feel a need to restate their credentials (van Lankveld et al., 2017; LaRocca & Bruns, 2006) and prove themselves (Dickinson et al., 2022; Kitchener, 2020; Simendinger et al., 2000). However, since those negative transitional experiences likely stem from the perceived inadequacy of their professional experience, restating one's non-academic credentials may in practice exacerbate matters as it "perpetuates and promotes the false analytical dualism of theory and practice" (Eacott, 2021; p. 1). Relatedly, the literature frequently shows that the

transition of second-career academics requires their acceptance of a significantly reduced professional status (Obembe, 2023; Kitchener, 2020; Gourlay, 2011a). The loss of authority and prestige, along with the acceptance of a lower salary, may be compounded by the humbling experience of starting on or near the lowest rung of the academic ladder (Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020; Knittel Mabry et al., 2004) leading to further adjustment challenges for second-career academics (Wilson et al., 2014a).

When experienced in concert with the negative impacts of inadequate transitional support, the compounding issues of lost confidence and reduced professional status significantly impact second-career academics just when attempting to form a new professional identity as academics (Herman et al., 2021). Knights & Clarke conceptualised the fragile academic self as a product of "the insecurities associated with 'doing' the job" (2014; p.336), which, as Dickinson et al. (2022) suggest that, for second-career academics manifests as imposter syndrome and significantly reduced levels of self-efficacy. These findings carry significant implications for forming a new professional identity for second-career academics during the initial stages of their transition. Matters of identity repeatedly appear in the literature as a complex but pivotal function of professional-to-academic career transitions (Griffiths & Dickinson, 2023; Obembe, 2023; Dickinson et al., 2022; Laari, 2022; Herman et al., 2021; Hollweck et al., 2021; van Lankveld et al., 2017; Wilson et al., 2014a & b; Smith & Boyd, 2012; Gourlay, 2011a & b; Shreeve, 2011; Bandow et al., 2007). According to Bitzer & De Jaeger (2016), a second-career academic's teaching practice, professional development, motivation, the value that they place on the job and their commitment to it in the long term are all fundamentally influenced by their professional identity. As Hodgson (2017; p.5) noted, interdependent factors, including "self-efficacy, pedagogical agency, mattering, and belonging, which were interrelated with a key aspect of a stable academic identity, pedagogical resilience", directly influence the practice of second-career academics.

Related to themes of mattering and belonging, the alignment of values between the second-career academic and their institution is a significant contributor to their identity formation (Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020; Gourlay, 2011b; Bandow et al., 2007) and is of particular importance for this cohort of academics since the development of a values incongruity in their previous role often drove their impetus to transition (Wilson et al., 2014a). The literature offers compelling participant testimonies of the power of values alignment ("Part of the reason I changed career is making a choice aligned with my values and what I believe I am meant to be. I found a place where my values match up with the values of the institution" (Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020; p. 5)) and incongruity ("discomfort with what she perceived as task-driven values, an individualistic ethos, and a physically and symbolically isolating landscape encountered in Higher Education" (Gourlay, 2011b; p. 601)).

The isolation mentioned by the participant in Gourlay's research is a common feature in the literature on second-career academics transitioning from professional careers (Wakely, 2021; Wood et al., 2016; Wilson et al., 2014a; Gourlay, 2011b; LaRocco & Bruns, 2006). The themes of isolation and the benefits of socialisation experienced by academics who followed a more traditional career path explain the importance placed upon socialising practices for second-career academics in the literature. Writing about career transitions more generally, Crafter et al. (2019) identify social context and resources (for example, peers) as a considerable influence on the success of a career transition. Specifically, regarding second-career academics, Dickinson et al. (2022) identify peer interaction and observations of competent practice as the most

significant factors influencing feelings of effectiveness. Gourley (2011a; p.76) points out, however, that "new types of academic staff ... enter complex, implicit fields of social practice, not clearly observable 'communities of practice'" and Mynott & Zimmatore (2021; p.10) report feelings of separation which are specific to the second-career academic "we feel that we stand apart from other people, within our context and both of our identities: practice and academic".

Many universities have sought to institute contractual mentoring programmes to support new inductees (MacPhail et al., 2024). While there have been relatively few studies into the efficacy of these programmes generally and not just for second-career academics (Cornelius et al., 2016), the literature on second-career academics indicates that the programmes have not resulted in significant success. Wilson et al. (2014a) identify that some universities have instituted mentoring programmes, but the research participants in their paper identified mentoring as something they would have liked. Similarly, the participants in Pickern and Costakis' 2023 study identified mentoring as a positive potential support mechanism (along with training and pedagogical help), indicating that it did not exist or was ineffective. Kitchener (2020; p.151) states, "Mentor support can be haphazard and, when it is good, was often attributed to luck". Bandow et al. (2007) identify that, unlike traditional academic recruitment in which similarly qualified candidates join at equivalent stages in their careers, the nature of second-career academics means that they will have diverse needs that do not lend themselves to a standard programme of support. Murray et al. (2014) argue that support may need to be more extensive and take significantly longer than conventional induction processes may offer. Citing Murray et al.'s research, Wakely concluded that mentoring is an insufficient response to these complex induction issues and adds that the nature of academic roles may actively make it "disadvantageous for experienced academic staff to support new staff" (2021; p.659).

3.5. Developing One's Pedagogy

There is little evidence in the literature of adequate support for second-career academics in preparing and delivering teaching materials. While students value the lived experience and real-life examples that second-career academics can use to supplement their teaching (Stevens, 2024; Obembe, 2023; Pickern & Costakis, 2023; Griffiths & Dickinson, 2023; Ong, 2022), this alone is not sufficient to create an effective teaching practice. Stephens (2015) points out that second-career academics may not have experienced a teaching environment since adolescence. For those second-career academics who return to education after a significant passage of time, observations of competent practice may have a beneficial influence (Dickinson et al., 2022). This hypothesis is supported by Obembe's 2023 study in which all those participants who had completed their postgraduate studies found it to be valuable in their transition as second-career academics.

While the challenge of developing pedagogical skills exists for all novice lecturers (Dvir, 2024), there is, according to Gourlay (2011; p.67), an ongoing expectation within the sector that new academics will have already developed their pedagogical understanding through postgraduate study and the "informal processes of learning within a collegial disciplinary context". In the absence of this grounding, second-career academics are reliant upon skills they developed for use in professional settings (Dickinson et al., 2022; Knittel Mabry, 2004), and consequently, "newly transitioned academic tends to prefer to teach post-experience graduate students working toward their MBA or a similar program. This is a group with whom transitioned academics have more in common" (Bandow et al., 2007; p. 24). One of the participants in the research conducted by Dickinson et al. (2022; p.22) likened the requirement to teach without

adequate preparation as making the transition 'like falling off a cliff', but the authors themselves argue that by leveraging their pre-existing skills second-career academics can utilise their "practitioner experience to encourage students to develop their own theories through constructivist learning" (ibid., p.6). However, Crowder and Mouratidou (2020; p.11) offer a note of caution advising that "new academics must therefore be prepared to dig much more deeply into theory and get beyond a 'training' mentality". The mention of training as an inadequate analogue for lecturing contrasts with Knittel Mabry et al. (2004; p.400), who, when speaking specifically about HR professionals transitioning to academia, posited a theory that "understanding of adult learning theory, course design and facilitation will, however, come in very handy".

In a marketised and regulated sector, second-career academics are expected to deliver high-level teaching to students who are accustomed to the teaching practice of more experienced academics. High-quality teaching is a skill developed and honed with time, often supported by reflective practice as part of a taught programme in educational practice (Hodgson, 2017). While important developmentally, the requirements of a taught programme, often a mandatory probationary requirement for the role, add another time-bound and pressurised element to a new lecturer's workload (Griffiths & Dickinson, 2023; Kitchener, 2020; Gourlay, 2011a). The ongoing and developmental nature of this approach naturally requires action before reflection and learning and, as such, is a poor mitigant for the 'sink and swim' approach taken more broadly in academic induction programmes. Some researchers have argued that the programmes themselves, while valuable in general, are fraught with issues for second-career academics due to "the assumption that all participants were already familiar with pedagogical terms" (Kitchener, 2021; p.12) and removed from the immediate needs of a developing practitioner (Trowler & Cooper; 2002). The literature shows that second-career academics are or, at the very least, feel wholly unprepared to teach (Obembe, 2023; Wilson et al., 2014a; Jensen et al., 2006) while being expected to develop for themselves "rich conceptions of teaching, along with an understanding of HE pedagogy and language" (Kitchener, 2023; p.12). Inevitably, it takes a considerable period for second-career academics to become skilled and confident lecturers, with Wakely (2021; p.657) suggesting that even in practice-based disciplines such as occupational therapy or physiotherapy "some new academic staff took up to three years to settle into their academic role".

The challenge of developing an individual's pedagogy is exacerbated for new academics by "the staggering amount of work involved, the relative lack of resources" (Knittel Mabry, 2004; p.399) which, again, participants in many studies were unprepared for (Leonard et al., 2023; Laari, 2022; Kolber & Heggart, 2021; Kitchener, 2020; Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020; Bandow et al., 2007; LaRocco & Burns, 2006; Jensen et al., 2006). A recurrent theme in the literature is the challenge presented by the pastoral side of an academic role and the lack of adequate preparation or adequate support for this (Dickinson et al., 2022; Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020; Wilson et al., 2014a). Many studies also note the significant administrative burden that the role carries (Leonard et al., 2023; Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020; Wilson et al., 2014a; Knittel Mabry et al., 2004) and the challenge of using inadequate and unfamiliar systems and bureaucracies with which the participants work (Obembe, 2023; Wakely, 2021; Kitchener, 2020; Wilson et al., 2014a). Griffiths & Dickinson (2023; p.168) summarise the workload for new academics thus: "Facing multiple, competing demands around achieving a doctorate, publishing research, and being returned in the Research Excellence Framework, alongside studying for a teaching

qualification, taking on module and course leadership, and becoming an academic personal tutor."

3.6. Developing as a Researcher

In many ways, the most significant element of the new academics' workload is the requirement to conduct and publish research, which Hodgson (2017; p.5) argues "was considered an essential aspect of the academic identity". Producing research at an acceptable standard for publication may be an even more pronounced challenge for second-career academics who may not have had the same grounding in methods and methodology as novice academics following a traditional career path. While some institutions will recruit academics to teaching-only roles, these are limited in number, and the absence of research can significantly limit career progression within the academy (Wakely, 2021) or to a limited number of institutions (Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020). In most academic roles there is an expectation that the role holder undertakes significant research that contributes to the existing body of knowledge, however, little additional support in either method and methodology or the requirements of academic writing is made available (Leonard et al., 2023; Kitchener, 2020; Wilson et al., 2014a; Gourlay, 2011a; LaRocco & Bruns, 2006; Knittel Mabry et al., 2004). The absence of support for novice researchers places second-career academics at a significant disadvantage when compared with traditional academics who have previously completed research projects (Dickinson et al., 2022; Wakely, 2021; Adcroft & Taylor, 2013; Posner, 2009) and have already established collaborative research networks (Mynott & Zimmatore, 2021; Wakely, 2021). Research can also be an individualistic process, which increases feelings of isolation, particularly for second-career academics who likely have spent their previous careers in collaborative settings (Wakeley, 2021; Gourlay, 2011a). MacFarlane (2021) highlights the changing nature of academic research, driven by the neoliberal prioritisation of publication metrics, which prioritises "those elements that are measurable (test scores, citations, social media shares)" (Kolber & Heggart, 2021; p. 28). The expectation of establishing a visible and credible online academic identity presents additional barriers for second-career academics who have limited networks in the academic community or experience in research (Eacott, 2020).

Established in the literature is the insightful and actionable way that second-career academics can contribute to the body of literature in their respective fields (Stevens, 2024; Hollweck, 2021; Eacott, 2021; Posner, 2009). They can demonstrate credibility as researchers due to their tacit knowledge of practice and fluency in industry-specific language and customs. Extending this line of thought, Dickfos (2019; p.244) argued that traditional academics should engage in professional practice for significant periods to benefit from "recognising and measuring the impact of their research by validating the practical application of their otherwise theoretical work". Dickfos' position echoes Boyer's (1996) influential argument that research should apply to practice rather than merely to extend knowledge and reinforces the case that second-career academics are well-placed to complete significant research projects because of their combination of "academic prowess and industry insights" (Ong, 2022; p. 120).

As with successful teaching at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, the successful publication of academic research requires second-career academics to engage with both academic theory and the specific conventions of academic writing. The challenge of adopting the expected style and language of academic writing was emphasised in several papers (Kitchener, 2023; Dickinson et al., 2022; Garcia et al., 2021; Wilson et al., 2014a; Gourlay,

2011a; Bandow et al., 2007; LaRocco & Bruns, 2006; Knittel Mabry et al., 2004) reflecting the lack of preparatory support they can access and "the assumption that all participants were already familiar with pedagogical terms" (Kitchener, 2021; P.11).

3.7. Negative Aspects of Career Transitions

Several themes mentioned in the literature were less significant, either mentioned in isolation by single papers or participants or expressed as being of lesser importance. Among these less significant themes are frustration with the slow pace of decision-making and activity in comparison to previous professional experiences (Kitchener, 2020; Knittel Mabry et al., 2004), the unexpected competitiveness of academia (Wakely, 2021; Wilson et al., 2014a; Gourlay, 2011a), the challenge of responding to the degree of flexibility in the role (Kitchener, 2023; Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020), a perceived loss of credibility in their profession resulting from the transition (Kitchener, 2023; Anderson, 2023), and the high likelihood that second-career academics will only be offered employment by less prestigious institutions (Kitchener, 2023; Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020; Ong, 2022).

3.8. Positive Aspects of Career Transitions

Despite the multiple challenges and barriers experienced by second-career academics, the overwhelming message from the literature is that research participants were eventually satisfied with having made the transition. Aside from isolated examples offered by Dickinson et al. (2022), Wilson et al. (2014a), Gourlay (2011b), and Knittel Mabry et al. (2004), there is no consistent pattern of second-career academics returning to their previous professions due to dissatisfaction with academia. This eventual satisfaction may be a consequence of the inherent selection bias of conducting research with existing second-career academics, however, the consistent refrain from the literature is that while the transition was challenging in unexpected and significant ways, it was ultimately worthwhile (Obembe, 2023; Ong, 2022; Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020; Wilson et al., 2014b; Gourlay, 2011a; Bandow et al., 2007). Among the many benefits mentioned (often duplicated across multiple studies), participants noted their satisfaction with feelings of freedom and autonomy (Gourlay, 2011b), enhanced work-life balance, flexibility, and a sense of fulfilling a calling (Crowder & Mouratidou, 2020), values-alignment and the satisfaction of developing students who will go on to make a positive impact (Dickinson et al., 2022), gaining recognition and status in a second professional domain (Hollweck et al., 2021), giving something back to a community (Jensen et al., 2006), gaining additional skills (Kitchener, 2023), passion for the subject and a desire to share it (Bitzer & De Jager, 2016), developing collegial relationships (Pickern & Costakis, 2023), and their ability to research things they are interested in (Leonard et al., 2023).

3.9. Recommendations in the Literature

In the literature, multiple researchers offered recommendations to enhance or support the transition of second-career academics into the sector (Kitchener, 2023; Obembe, 2023; Pickern & Costakis, 2023; Dickinson et al., 2022; Herman et al., 2021; Wilson et al., 2014c; Gourlay, 2011a). Wakely (2021; p.662) argues that given the limited literature on the topic, specific recommendations are unwise without additional research and adds that, in general, "suitable support must be fostered both at an individual level and systematically". Systematic support tailored to transitioning second-career academics will require "a multi-dimensional and multi-directional approach" (Wilson et al., 2014c; p.10), meaning that "it may be difficult to simplify

a concept of accommodating exogenous faculty into the form of a coherent set of best practices" (Bandow et al., 2007; p. 24).

Where recommendations appear in the literature, they focus on the following themes:

3.9.1. Mentoring

Developing supportive interpersonal environments through mentoring (Kitchener, 2023; Pickern & Costakis, 2023), collaborative peer networks (Dickinson et al., 2022), or some combination of both in a mentoring network (Obembe, 2023). Herman et al. (2021) expanded this to a focus on developing care-full working communities, which echoed Gourlay's (2011a) call for communities of practice that support personal and professional growth. Wilson et al. (2014c) proposed that second-career academics should seek to develop these networks for themselves by joining committees.

3.9.2. Academic Skills Programmes

Specific programmes to develop academic skills that are either explicitly created for second-career academics (Pickern & Costakis, 2023) or developed from existing programmes (Kitchener, 2023; Dickinson et al., 2022). Again, Wilson et al., (2014c) suggested that second-career academics can proactively bridge this gap by involving themselves in collaborative research to help foster these skills.

3.9.3. Reference Materials

Improved reference information such as a dynamic academic handbook (Kitchener, 2023) created by and for second-career academics, a programme of 'taster' activities which Pickern and Costakis (2023) call a realistic job preview and, as Wilson et al. (2014c) suggest, guest lecturing and student mentoring. Kitchener (2023) also recommended that there be a specific focus on developing academic literacy in transitioning inductees, and Gourlay (2011a; p.76) suggests that information should aim to de-mystify academic careers and "share these less observable practices more explicitly".

3.9.4. Agency

Turning away from a deficit approach to second-career academics, Dickinson et al. (2022) suggest that developing their agency should be an explicit focus of induction activity, echoing Obembe's (2023) call for a culture shift to place more value on the different and complementary skill sets that second-career academics bring to universities. Indeed, Pickern and Costakis (2023) argue that universities should support ongoing industry placements for second-career academics so that their knowledge and connections remain current.

3.9.5. Institutional Changes

Finally, Obembe (2023) argues that university recruitment should map to industry skillsets more effectively, placing greater emphasis on practitioner experience and rewarding this with greater seniority and higher remuneration. Recognising the specific value that second-career academics bring, Kitchener (2023; p.13) proposes that universities should take advantage of those skills and experience to "act as a resource to harmonise discourses and practices".

4. Discussion

The author's reflection on their transition to academia following a business career was the impetus to conduct this literature review. Several themes emerged from the review of the literature and, after removing the phenomenological 'bracket,' reflecting upon the literature, and considering firsthand experiences, the author will discuss the most pertinent of these themes in this section.

4.1. A Form of Hazing

Firstly, the drastic 'falling off a cliff' nature of the transition that the author personally experienced which is a key theme in the literature seems to be even more pronounced than was apparent at the time when viewed with the benefit of hindsight. As some of the research participants in the literature showed, the perniciousness of boundary protection actions and the exhausting toll of navigating new and alien systems, cultures, and terminology verges on intolerable. The author's reading of the literature and personal experience upon transitioning suggests the idea that second-career academics undergo a form of hazing ritual from their new colleagues and institutions to earn their place in the accepted culture. Unlike hazing in its traditional sense, however, there is no evidence that second-career academics will pass on these toxic learned behaviours to colleagues who follow in their path once that initiation is complete. Indeed, the literature suggests that experienced second-career academics should be relied upon as mentors, far removed from the boundary-protecting gatekeeper role that hazing performs.

4.2. Workload Concerns

While the transition from a previous career into academia is undoubtedly jarring and can lead to feelings of confusion and inauthenticity, some of the research commentary on workload risks overstatement. The volume of work is high and complex, academia is by no means an easy alternative to other professional sectors, but the author found the difference to be less pronounced than the literature suggests. The author has previously made the transition from the public sector to the private sector and then from the private sector to the third sector. Each of the author's prior transitions required less of an adjustment in terms of culture, language, and behaviour than the transition to higher education necessitated, but the workloads were broadly comparable. The workload difference that requires the most significant adjustment is the more deliberate pace of work, particularly in comparison to the private sector, and the consequent number of active and ongoing workstreams to manage.

4.3. Authentic Learning and Employability

Given the increasingly developmental nature of academia, which requires more than the mere teaching of skills (Cole & Donald, 2022) while preparing students for a sustainable career (Donald & Mouratidou, 2022) in an evolving employment landscape (Crosta et al., 2023), second-career academics have a vital role to play. Not only do they have relatable and credible experiences of the workplace allowing them to teach with engaging narratives to supplement theory and enable more effective learning (Hedlund, 2021), but they can also credibly create authentic learning and assessment experiences (Manville et al., 2022).

4.4. Non-traditional Learners and Employability

In the literature, there are clear parallels between second-career academics and non-traditional widening participation students (Gourlay, 2011a), and the systemic disadvantages they face in

the workplace reinforce those similarities. For students and graduates, the development of career navigation skills such as resilience and context adaptation are paramount in the current and coming employment climate (Murphy, 2024; Fellows, 2024), and second-career academics who have had to develop and utilise these attributes simply to complete a transition to higher education are well placed to support students of this nature.

4.5. Mentors

The benefits for second-career academics of a combination of formal teaching and informal mentoring, as outlined in the literature, also accord with the author's experiences. When reading Kitchener (2023) on the inaccessibility of academic language for outsiders, an image of a notepad covered in words like 'axiomatic', 'synthesise', and 'andragogy' to look up in a dictionary after the lecture came to the author's mind. In the literature and the author's lived experience, there is considerable value in the provision of informal mentors for second-career academics who are also students (Donald, 2023; Zografou & McDermott, 2022; Cseh Papp & Horváth-Csikós, 2021).

4.6. Research

Research, as a task for second-career academics, was a topic that generated mixed responses in the literature, with its necessity for career advancement and academic credibility being of seemingly higher importance than as a vehicle for personal and professional growth, which is where the mismatch between the literature and the author's lived experience was most stark. The author's more positive inclination toward academic research may be influenced by their having been fortunate enough to have completed their earliest published research with supportive colleagues who were themselves second-career academics (Anonymised citation, 2023) and speaks again to the importance of mentorship for early career researchers (Mahayosnand, 2024). Irrespective of the reasons for pursuing research (Donald & Duck, 2024), the value for second-career academics in gaining experience and credibility as researchers goes far beyond the narrow benefits of an enhanced professional academic profile.

4.7. Loss of Professional Status

The corollary of this is that the more successful a transition one makes into academia, the more successful one has made from one's previous profession which "dilutes the immediacy of that practice-based experience" (Anderson, 2023; p. 2). While not a significant concern for many participants in the literature, with the notable exception of Crowder & Mouratidou (2020), this is discussed by several authors (Obembe, 2023; Dickinson et al., 2022; Ong, 2022; Wakely, 2021; Posner, 2009) and is a concern that inspired the author to continue in practice as a consultant, despite the workload and time-management challenges, throughout and beyond their transition into an academic role.

4.8. Recommendations in the Literature

Many of the recommendations offered in the literature argue that higher education institutions change their practice to accommodate the diverse needs of second-career academics better. Again, the author is at odds with the body of literature on the practicality of these recommendations. The boundary protection that exists in higher education is not yet creating a recruitment crisis despite a shrinking proportion of traditional academics (Hodgson, 2017) and the value that second-career academics can bring in allowing universities to deliver highly skilled entrants to the labour market (Obembe, 2023; Dickinson et al., 2022). Even in what the

literature identifies as less prestigious institutions, there will be a reluctance to adapt unless an urgent need arises. As Bandow et al. (2007; p.23) show, resistance to change will always exist as "non-traditional institutions will experience pressure to adopt traditional models for the sake of their own legitimacy". While enough second-career academics continue to navigate the 'sink or swim' nature of induction into the academy, there is little impetus for institutions to recognise, never mind address, the barriers they and their cultures present. Obembe (2023) may laudably call for a culture change, but the author of this paper sees no evidence that the sector will listen to this call, regardless of the sensible proposals offered. In short, if the issues that Knittel Mabry et al. identified in 2004 remain issues two decades on, which the literature clearly shows is the case, then there seems little prospect of top-down change to mitigate or eliminate the barriers faced by second-career academics happening any time soon.

5. Conclusion

This paper summarised the findings in the literature from the last twenty-five years on the topic of second-career academics transitioning to higher education. Based on the findings in the literature and the author's own experiences, the transition of career professionals into academia as educators is clearly a skills development issue that the sector is failing to address appropriately. The literature clearly outlines the benefits for the sector – and for the students – of broadening the base from which it recruits its academics, highlighting the advantages of diverse pedagogical and assessment styles and the relevancy of 'real-world' teaching examples. The literature also shows the challenges presented to second-career academics making the transition of the boundary protection cultures common in the sector. There are calls for the sector to change and to embrace the benefits brought by second-career academics by providing more supportive developmental pathways for transitioning professionals. However, given the lack of an urgent reason to implement change, it is difficult to envisage the sector moving beyond its current 'sink or swim' mentality. Over time, the sector will naturally become a more accommodating place for second-career academics as their numbers increase and the opportunities for collegial relationships with people who have 'walked the walk' multiply. However, this is a poor substitute for a deliberate, considered strategy to support transitioning professionals. Based on the literature and the author's personal experience it seems that, for now at least, second-career academics transitioning into higher education will, for the most part, continue to have to work things out for themselves. In view of this, the author offers the following recommendations based on the literature and lived experience:

5.1. Testing the Water

Exposure to the realities of academia and academic life should extend beyond this paper and the literature it has discussed and is best sought directly. Potential second-career academics should exploit personal and professional networks to solicit advice, guidance, and anecdotal evidence as well as seek opportunities for guest speaking, guest lecturing, teaching support, exposure to teaching materials, and, perhaps, research.

5.2. Seek a Mentor

Building on the first example, but without relying on a sole source of support or waiting for institutions to provide adequate mentoring solutions, finding a reliable and knowledgeable colleague can be invaluable. Where possible, someone who has transitioned into academia will be able to offer a better-informed perspective on your situation.

5.3. Walk the Walk and Talk the Talk

Being an academic is not something that can be easily simulated. Academia is a competitive profession which, by its very nature, is populated by experts. There is no shortcut to a successful transition into academia, you must read the literature and become comfortable with discussing academic concepts in an appropriate way to signal to your colleagues and students that you do have the necessary academic credibility.

5.4. Don't Lose Sight of What You Have to Offer

For individuals considering transitioning to a career in academia, it is important to recognise the value you add in enriching the academic community and, by extension, your wider communities. Second-career academics are invaluable in developing the skills and attributes of students to prepare them adequately to respond to current and forthcoming challenges both individually and collectively to change the world for the better.

6. References

- Adcroft, A., & Taylor, D. (2013). Support for new career academics: An integrated model for research intensive university business and management schools. *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(6), 827–840. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2011.599378>
- Anderson, L. (2023). Professional development for practitioners in academia: Pracademia. *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.56433/jpaap.v11i3.600>
- Grabarski, M., Mouratidou, M., and Fellows, I. (2023). The Evolution of Learning and Technological Innovation: Preparing Students for Successful Careers in W.E. Donald (ed.) *Establishing and Maintaining Sustainable Career Ecosystems for University Students and Graduates*. IGI Global. <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-6684-7442-6.ch004>
- Fellows, I., Gilbert, G., Mathias, L., and Parkes, S. (2024). Disrupting the third-space through playfulness, mattering, and unbounded perspectives, *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education*, (31). Forthcoming publication (DOI to be confirmed).
- Bains, L. (2024). My experience of fellowship as a pracademic | Advance HE. *AdvanceHE*. <https://rb.gy/sdj825>
- Bandow, D., Minsky, B., & Voss, R. S. (2007). Reinventing the future: Investigating career transitions from industry to academia. *Journal of Human Resources Education*, 1(1), 23–37. <https://journals.troy.edu/index.php/JHRE/article/view/16>
- Bansal, P., Bertels, S., Ewart, T., MacConnachie, P., & O'Brien, J. (2012). Bridging the research-practice gap. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 26. 73–92. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2011.0140>
- Barnacle, R., & Mewburn, I. (2010). Learning networks and the journey of “becoming doctor”. *Studies in Higher Education*, 35, 433–444. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075070903131214>
- Bartunek, J. M., & Rynes, S. L. (2014). Academics and practitioners are alike and unlike: The paradoxes of academic–practitioner relationships. *Journal of Management*, 40(5), 1181–1201. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206314529160>
- Bitzer, E. & De Jager, E. (2016). Lecturers’ professional identity: The case of chartered accountants in academia. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 30(4), 171–189. <https://doi.org/10.20853/30-4-624>

-
- Blenkinsopp, J., & Stalker, B. (2004). Identity work in the transition from manager to management academic. *Management Decision*, 42, 418–429.
- Boyer, E. (1996). The scholarship of engagement. *Journal of Public Service & Outreach*, 1(1), 11–20. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3824459>
- Braun, V., Clarke, V. & Gray, D. (2017). *Collecting qualitative data: a practical guide to textual, media and virtual techniques*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- Cole, D., & Donald, W. E. (2022). Shifting the narrative: Towards a more holistic approach for learning. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 2(1), 3–4. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjsd.2022.v2.i1.pp3-4>
- Cornelius, V., Wood, L., & Lai, J. (2016). Implementation and evaluation of a formal academic-peer-mentoring programme in higher education. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 17(3), 193–205. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469787416654796>
- Crafter, S., Maunder, R., & Soulsby, L. (2019). *Developmental transitions: Exploring stability and change through the lifespan*. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315625263>
- Crosta, L., Banda, V., & Bakay, E. (2023). 21st Century Skills development among young graduates: A European perspective. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 3(1), 40–56. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjsd.2023.v3.i1.pp40-56>
- Crowder, M., & Mouratidou, M. (2020). *Chapter 2: Career transitions from industry to academia*. <https://www.elgaronline.com/edcollchap/edcoll/9781788119184/9781788119184.00009.xml>
- Cseh Papp, I., & Horváth-Csikós, G. (2021). Educational and economic aspects of mentoring: How mentoring can contribute to the development of soft skills. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 1(1), 3–11. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjsd.2021.v1.i1.pp3-11>
- Dickfos, J. (2019). Academic professional development: Benefits of a pracademic experience. *International Journal of Work-Integrated Learning*, 20(3), 243–255.
- Dickinson, J., Fowler, A., & Griffiths, T.-L. (2022). Pracademics? Exploring transitions and professional identities in higher education. *Studies in Higher Education*, 47(2), 290–304. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2020.1744123>
- Donald, W. E. (2023). Three Key ways that mentorship can support early career scholars. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 3(2), 3–6. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjsd.2023.v3.i2.pp3-6>
- Donald, W. E., & Duck, N. J. (2024). Life is too short to be serious all the time: Donald Duck presents unconventional motivations for publishing in academia. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 4(1), 141–145. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjsd.2024.v4.i1.pp141-145>
- Donald, W. E., & Mouratidou, M. (2022). Preparing for a sustainable career: Challenges and opportunities. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 2(2), 3–5. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjsd.2022.v2.i2.pp3-5>
- Dvir, N. (2024). Using narrative pedagogy for novice teachers’ professional development. *Professional Development in Education*, 50(4), 625–637. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2021.1895285>
- Eacott, S. (2021). Pracademia: An answer but not the answer to an enduring question. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 7, 57–70. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPC-12-2020-0100>
- Fellows, I. (2023). Critical educators should embrace the employability agenda. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 3(1), 10–14. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjsd.2023.v3.i1.pp10-14>
-

-
- Fellows, I. (2024). Supporting widening participation students without creating dependency or leaving them unprepared for work in the Neoliberal Era: A discussion paper. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 4(1), 95–103. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjds.2024.v4.i1.pp95-103>
- Garcia, S., Bonner, E., Nelson, R., Yuen, T., Marone, V., & Browning, J. (2021). Embedded experts supporting instructional practice of faculty transitioning from industry to academia. *College Teaching*, 70, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2021.1923452>
- Gourlay, L. (2011a). ‘I’d landed on the moon’: A new lecturer leaves the academy. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 16(5), 591–601. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13562517.2011.605548>
- Gourlay, L. (2011b). New lecturers and the myth of ‘communities of practice.’ *Studies in Continuing Education*, 33(1), 67–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037X.2010.515570>
- Grafström, M., Jonsson, A., & Klintman, M. (2023). Embracing the academic–practice gap: Knowledge collaboration and the role of institutional knotting. *Management Learning*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13505076231213056>
- Griffiths, T.-L., & Dickinson, J. (2023). Collaboration in a liminal space: Pracademia. *Journal of Perspectives in Applied Academic Practice*, 11(3). <https://doi.org/10.56433/jpaap.v11i3.580>
- Hammersley, M. (2012). Methodological paradigms in educational research. British Educational Research. Retrieved August 5, 2024 <https://www.bera.ac.uk/publication/methodological-paradigms-in-educational-research>
- Hedlund, A. (2021). Beliefs and attitudes that influence learning: A mind, Brain, and education literature review. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 1(2), 44–57. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjds.2021.v1.i2.pp44-57>
- Herman, N., Jose, M., Katiya, M., Kemp, M., le Roux, N., Swart-Jansen van Vuuren, C., & van der Merwe, C. (2021). Entering the world of academia is like starting a new life: A trio of reflections from health professionals joining academia as second career academics. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 26(1), 69–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360144X.2020.1784742>
- Hodgson, R. (2017). *New lecturers’ journeys: The formation of ‘the academic’ in higher education* [Doctoral dissertation, Sheffield Hallam University]. <https://doi.org/10.7190/SHU-THESIS-00050>
- Hollweck, T., Netolicky, D., & Campbell, P. (2021). Defining and exploring pracademia: Identity, community, and engagement. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 7(1), 6–25. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPCC-05-2021-0026>
- Jensen, J., Rabe, C., Runde, S., & Wee, L.C. (2006). Transition from Industry to Academia: Reflections of Three New Faculty Members. *Information Systems Education Journal*, 4(66). <http://isedj.org/4/66/>
- Kitchener, M. (2020). *Supporting academics’ full-time transition from professional practice to university. A qualitative study.* [Doctoral dissertation, Oxford Brookes University] <https://doi.org/10.24384/wbfh-cv92>
- Kitchener, M. (2021) *Supporting academics’ full-time transition from professional practice to university. A qualitative study* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Oxford Brookes University.
-

-
- Kitchener, M. (2023). 'Don't take your briefcase': Navigating a career change from professional practice to the academic role. In: Dickinson, J., Griffiths, TL. (eds) *Professional development for practitioners in academia. Knowledge studies in higher education, Vol 13.*, Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-33746-8_2
- Knights, D., & Clarke, C.A. (2014). It's a bittersweet symphony, this life: Fragile academic selves and insecure identities at work. *Organization Studies*, 35(3): 335–357. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0170840613508396>
- Knittel Mabry, C., May, G. L., & Berger, N. (2004). Moving from practice to academia: Three perspectives. *Human Resource Development International*, 7(3), 395–402. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1367886042000245987>
- Kolber, S., & Heggart, K. (2021). Education focussed pracademics on Twitter: Building democratic fora. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 7(1), 26–44. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPCCC-11-2020-0090>
- Kormanik, M.B., Lehner, R.D. and Winnick, T.A. (2009). General competencies for the HRD scholar-practitioner: Perspectives from across the profession. *Advances in Developing Human Resources*, 11(4), 486–506. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1523422309344170>
- Laari, T. (2022). Experiences of novice educators with the role transition from clinical practice to academia: A phenomenological study in Ghana. *Journal of Research Development in Nursing and Midwifery*, 19, 18–21. <http://doi.org/10.61186/jgbfnm.19.2.18>
- LaRocco, D. J., & Bruns, D. (2006). *Practitioner to professor: Second career academics' perceptions of entry into the academy*. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Practitioner-to-Professor%3A-Second-Career-Academics'-LaRocco-Bruns/d405075cd84fd4cd8a5c5755a99a914eb1998759>
- Leonard, C., Moolman, J., & Shuttleworth, C. (2023). Factors that motivate millennial accountancy professionals in industry to become academics. *Journal of Economic and Financial Sciences*, 16. <https://doi.org/10.4102/jef.v16i1.872>
- Lieberman, A. (1992), "The meaning of scholarly activity and the building of community", *Educational Researcher*, 21(6),5–12, <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X021006005>
- MacPhail, A., Tannehill, D., & Ataman, R. (2024). The role of the critical friend in supporting and enhancing professional learning and development. *Professional Development in Education*, 50(4), 597–610. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2021.1879235>
- Macfarlane, B. (2021). The spirit of research. *Oxford Review of Education*, 47. 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054985.2021.1884058>
- McDonald, M.P. and Mooney, C.Z. (2011). 'Pracademics': mixing an academic career with practical politics: Editors' introduction. *Political Science and Politics*, 44(2), 251–253. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096511000035>
- Manville, G., Donald, W. E., & Eves, A. (2022). Can Embedding Authentic Assessment Into the Curriculum Enhance the Employability of Business School Students? *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 2(2), 73–87. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjds.2022.v2.i2.pp73-87>
- Mahayosnand, P. P. (2024). Research writing, peer review and academic publishing: Benefits of individual, institutional and journal mentoring. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 4(1), 136–140. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjds.2024.v4.i1.pp136-140>
- Miles, M.B., Huberman, A.M., & Saldaña, J. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis: a methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). London: Sage
-

-
- Mohandas, N.P. (2023). Bring the warriors back home: Contemplating the need for retaining a talented workforce in organisations. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 3(2), 16–19. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjds.2023.v3.i2.pp16-19>
- Murphy, L. (2024). Cultivating resilience in Part-time doctoral students. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 4(1), 146–150. <https://doi.org/10.52398/gjds.2024.v4.i1.pp146-150>
- Murray, C., Stanley, M., & Wright, S. (2014). The transition from clinician to academic in nursing and allied health: A qualitative meta-synthesis. *Nurse Education Today*, 34(3), 389–395. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2013.06.010>
- Myers, R. (2006). Teaching for the love of it. *Journal of Accountancy*, 201(6), 30–38.
- Mynott, J., & Zimmatore, M. (2021). Pracademic productive friction: Boundary crossing and pressure points. *Journal of Professional Capital and Community*, 7(1), 45–56. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPC-11-2020-0093>
- Obembe, F. (2023). Pracademics: Facilitating smooth transition from industry to academia. In J. Dickinson & T.-L. Griffiths (Eds.), *Professional development for practitioners in academia. Knowledge studies in higher education, Vol 13*. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-33746-8_8
- Ong, L. T. (2022). Surviving a re-entry: Second-career academics in business schools in Malaysia. *Educational Research for Policy and Practice*, 21, 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10671-021-09295-9>
- Owen, L., & Flynn, M. (2004). Changing work: mid-to-late life of transitions in employment. *Ageing International*, 29, 333–350.
- Owens, L.W. (2016). Reflections of a pracademic: A journey from social work practitioner to academic. *Reflections*, 22(1), 37–44.
- Pal, M. (2022). Employability as exploitability: A Marxist critical pedagogy. In N. Harris & O. Acaroğlu (Eds.), *Thinking Beyond Neoliberalism: Alternative Societies, Transition, and Resistance* (pp. 197–219). Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82669-7_9
- Pickern, J. S., & Costakis, H. R. (2023). The intersection of industry and academia: Assessing the perceptions and experiences of industry professionals who transition to academic roles in Higher Education in the United States. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2023.2299151>
- Posner, P. (2009). The pracademic: An agenda for re-engaging practitioners and academics. *Public Budgeting & Finance*, 29. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-5850.2009.00921.x>
- Ragland, B.B. (2006). Positioning the practitioner-researcher: Five ways of looking at practice. *Action Research*, 4(2), 165–182.
- Shreeve, A. (2011) Being in two camps: Conflicting experiences for practice-based academics. *Studies in Continuing Education*. 33(1), 79–91. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0158037X.2011.521681>
- Silverman D. (2015). *Interpreting qualitative data* (5th ed.). London: Sage
- Simendinger, E., Puia, G., Kraft, K., & Jaspersen, M. (2000). The Career Transition from Practitioner to Academic. *Career Development International*. 5(2). <https://doi.org/10.1108/13620430010318990>
-

-
- Smith, C., & Boyd, P. (2012). Becoming an Academic: The Reconstruction of Identity by Recently Appointed Lecturers in Nursing, Midwifery, and the Allied Health Professions. *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*. 49(1), 63-72.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/14703297.2012.647784>
- Stephens, G. (2015). Uncertified and Teaching: Industry Professionals in Career and Technical Education Classrooms. *International Journal for Research in Vocational Education and Training*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.13152/IJRVET.2.2.4>
- Stevens, M. (2024). *Exploring Practitioner-Academic Potential in the Construction Management Discipline: A Case Study*. 46th Annual AUBEA Conference. Available from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/377085082_Exploring_Practitioner-Academic_Potential_in_the_Construction_Management_Discipline_A_Case_Study (accessed 13 August 2024).
- Thornton, A. B. (2010). *Understanding the socialization experiences of new technical faculty: A transition from industry to the technical college*. University of New Orleans.
- Trowler, P., & Cooper, A. (2002). Teaching and Learning Regimes: Implicit Theories and Recurrent Practices in the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning through Educational Development Programmes. *Higher Education Research & Development*. 21(3), 221–240.
- van Lankveld, T., Schoonenboom, J., Volman, M., Croiset, G., & Beishuizen, J. (2017) Developing a Teacher Identity in the University Context: A Systematic Review of the Literature. *Higher Education Research and Development*. 36(2), 325-342.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2016.1208154>
- Volpe, M., & Chandler, D. (1999). Resolving Conflicts in Institutions of Higher Education: Challenges for Pracademics. *CNCR-Hewlett Foundation Seed Grant White Papers*.
<https://readingroom.law.gsu.edu/seedgrant/8>
- Wakely, L. (2021). Does the culture of academia support developing academics transitioning from professional practice? *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 43(6), 654–665.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2021.1905495>
- Waller, R., Lemoine, P., Mense, E., & Richardson, M. (2020). Building Capacity for Quality Assurance in Global Higher Education. *Journal of Education and Development*. 4(1) 37-42
<https://doi.org/10.20849/jed.v4i1.718>
- Whitchurch, C. (2008). Shifting Identities and Blurring Boundaries: The Emergence of Third Space Professionals in UK Higher Education. *Higher Education Quarterly*. 62(4). 377-396.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2273.2008.00387.x>
- Wilson, M. J., Wood, L., Solomonides, I., Dixon, P., & Goos, M. (2014a). Navigating the Career Transition from Industry to Academia. *Industry and Higher Education*, 28(1), 5–13.
<https://doi.org/10.5367/ihe.2014.0189>
- Wilson, M., Wood, L., Solomonides, I., Peter, D., & Goos, M. (2014b). Down the Rabbit Hole: Navigating the Career Transition from Industry to Academia. *Industry and Higher Education*, 28, 5–13. <https://doi.org/10.5367/ihe.2014.0189>
- Wilson, M. J., Wood, L., Solomonides, I., Goos, M., & Dixon, P. (2014c). *Practice to academy transition* (ISBN 978-1-74361-622-2). Office for Learning and Teaching, Department for Education, Australia.

Wood, C., Farmer, M.D. & Goodall, D. (2016). Changing professional identity in the transition from practitioner to lecturer in Higher Education: An interpretive phenomenological analysis. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*. 21(3), 229–245.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2016.1195173>

Zografou, A., & McDermott, L. (2022). Mentorship in Higher Education: The Keys to Unlocking Meaningful Mentoring Relationships. *GILE Journal of Skills Development*, 2(1), 71–78.

<https://doi.org/10.52398/gjdsd.2022.v2.i1.pp71-78>

Declaration Statements

Conflict of Interest

The author reports no conflict of interest.

Funding

The author received no financial support for this article's research, authorship, and/or publication.

Ethics Statement

No dataset is associated with this article.

Open Access Agreement

This article is published under a CC BY 4.0 license. This license allows reusers to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any medium or format, so long as attribution is given to the creator. The license allows for commercial use. For more information, please visit

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>

Corresponding Author

The corresponding author for this manuscript is Ian Fellows who can be contacted by email via ian.fellows@canterbury.ac.uk.