

## **The impact of working from home on academics' teaching and learning practices**

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This paper explores the learning and labour of academics during the beginnings of the novel coronavirus outbreak in 2020. This challenging period saw academics moving to working from home arrangements, adapting academic work to the COVID-19 restrictions. In Australia, where most of the participants of our study were based, these restrictions included border closures, various 'lockdowns' and restrictions, which would disrupt both personal and professional life. Our photo-based research project surveyed academics about their experiences during this time. This study makes visible the impact that the changing built and virtual environments had on academics' practices, relationships and identities. We theorise these shifting work-home arrangements, the academics' learning, their emergent agencies and renegotiations of relationships using the theory of practice architectures. Our findings suggest that even though these changes seemed collectively shared, the COVID-19 disruptions to academics' labour were not experienced equally. Some academics reported welcome shifts that balanced work/life practices, strengthened professional relationships, and created more time for reflection on academic identity; others reported that the same shifts meant a loss of boundaries and diminished agency, as personal time and home spaces were appropriated for work activities, and professional relationships felt less fulfilling. The agency of academics and their capacity to learn new practices, undoubtedly shaped their responses. However, we believe that academics' relative privilege also undergirds this agency. The shifting practice arrangements during the beginnings of the pandemic enabled and constrained academics, but these new practice architectures also uncovered, inflected and renewed participants' thinking on the future of their academic labour. However, since those emergent days in 2020, the Australian university sector has continued to struggle with financial shortfalls as a direct consequence of border closures and the lack of government

support. As many academics continue in working-from-home arrangements, the implications of our findings in relation to these ongoing challenges suggest that the continued re-alignments in academic labour might produce winners and losers. While some may be equipped for the learning and adaptiveness that the situation demands, our data leads us to believe that others might be experiencing even more precarity in their working arrangements. This raises important questions for current and future research as to the opportunities, but also vulnerabilities, for adaptive academic practice, subjectivities and ways of relating.