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# Responses to precarity; building solidarity

## The Australian perspective

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# Background

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- **37 public universities**
- **Government a minority source of revenue**
- **Casual work**
- **Bargaining settings**



## Barriers to solidarity and collective action

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- **Casual staff are diverse, isolated and invisible**
- **Attribution is difficult**
- **Speaking out means no more work**
- **union slow to respond**

## How far can casual staff bend for flexibility?

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### One-legged tree pose

Practice *finding* balance in a life of unstable work.



### Standing forward bend

Represents the race-to-the-bottom in our conditions.



### Eagle pose

Our arms and legs wrapped in knots, trying to meet the university's constantly changing requirements.



### Chair pose

A substitute for not having any office space.

## Glimmers of hope and possibility

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- **Online activism** <https://actualcasuals.wordpress.com/>

**CASA**

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A HOME ONLINE FOR CASUAL, ADJUNCT, SESSIONAL STAFF AND THEIR ALLIES IN  
AUSTRALIAN HIGHER EDUCATION

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- **The risk to teaching quality**

## Future challenges

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- **Pressures to tighten budgets remain**
- **Regulation through bargaining difficult**
- **Representation is challenging**