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## **Flying High: Academic Air Travel, Internationalisation and Sustainability**

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This paper discusses the 'absent presence' of hypermobility in contemporary Australian academia, both as lived experience and as a normative institutional orientation. Academic mobility is closely tied to one's ability to cultivate and maintain 'network capital' (Larson, Axhausen & Urry, 2006). Such forms of extended social capital are seen as promoting one's ability to access the most prized elements of the academic career - international collaborations, high-impact journal publications, and research grants. This paper draws on recent research conducted on Australian academics' expectations to travel by air, and the viability of alternative modes of collaborating and meeting. We find that the imperative to mobility is not just linked to personal academic preference, but is embedded in imperatives toward internationalisation in the policies of the Australian research and tertiary education sector. However, the 'presence' of - and expectations around - mobility within academic discourses is contrasted by a relative 'absence' of recognition of its social and environmental implications. Many Australian university sustainability policies, for instance, fail to acknowledge air travel as a notable source of their carbon footprint. Drawing on a survey conducted with Australian academics, and an analysis of university sustainability and broader institutional policies, we discuss the problematic contradiction that academic air travel poses.