

Measuring Individual Research Activity Procedures

Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) The [Measuring Individual Research Activity Policy](#) was developed in 2013 to replace the Research Active Index Policy. With this, a revised measure to calculate the research activity of an individual staff member, the Measure of Research Activity (or MORA), replaced the measure that was included in the Research Active Index Policy, which was known as the Research Active Index (or RAI).

(2) To ensure continuity of research activity measurement, it is intended to transition from the RAI to the MORA over a period three years. As such:

- a. the 2014 MORA calculation will be made of the RAI score obtained in 2011, 2012, and the MORA score for 2013
- b. in 2015, the MORA score will be made up of the RAI score obtained in 2012, and the MORA scores obtained in 2013 and 2014.
- c. in 2016, the transition from RAI to MORA will be complete, and the MORA Score will be made up of MORA calculations from 2013, 2014 and 2015.

(3) With that in mind, and in accordance with the [Measuring Individual Research Activity Policy](#), these procedures have been designed to provide the process associated with the calculation of the MORA.

Section 2 - Scope / Application

(4) This Procedure applies to all researchers across the University.

Section 3 - Definitions

(5) Nil

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(6) See [Measuring Individual Research Activity Policy](#).

Section 5 - Procedures

Part A - Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Office for Research	Receives all data relating to MORA Considers and determines where Other Substantial Research Outputs can be included in MORA Calculates MORA Releases MORA results to the University Consider requests for recalculation of MORA
Researcher	Provides all required data and evidence to support their MORA calculation If desired, provide evidence of basis for recalculation of MORA
Deans of Colleges	Proposes alternative quality measures, if desired, to the PVC Research & Research Training Requests amendment to or rescinding of alternative quality measures
PVC Research and Research Training	Considers appeals against Office for Research determinations with respect to the inclusion of Other Substantial Research Outputs Considers appeals against Office for Research determinations with respect to requests to recalculate MORA Considers and approves / denies requests to utilise alternative quality measures in calculating MORA values Considers and approves / denies requests to amend or rescind alternative quality measures in calculating MORA values

Part B - MORA Indicators

(7) This section outlines the indicators that can be used in the calculation of the MORA.

Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC)

(8) This is as outlined in the policy, and includes data collected and reported by the University to the Commonwealth Government under the HERDC process. It includes:

- a. External Research Income report by the University in a manner that is consistent with the HERDC definition applied by the Commonwealth Government at the time of reporting and demarcated by Income Category (1, 2, 3 and 4).
- b. Research Publications reported by the University in a manner that are consistent with the HERDC definition applied by the Commonwealth Government at the time of reporting and demarcated according to type of publication.

Creative works as Research

(9) Creative Works as research are those research outputs that are consistent with the VU Creative Works as Research Guidelines and approved by the Creative Works as Research Evaluation Committee.

Research Student Completions

(10) Research students include students completing a Research Degree as defined and in accordance with relevant University policies and procedures.

(11) A Research Student Completion refers to the submission for examination and Classification of a Thesis in

accordance with and meeting the requirements of University policy.

(12) The MORA calculation will only include:

- a. research doctorate students successfully supervised to completion within 5 years (full time equivalent)
- b. Masters by Research students successfully supervised to completion within 3 years (full-time equivalent)

Other Substantial Research Outputs

(13) A staff member may seek (subject to approval) to include other Research outputs calculation (henceforth referred to as 'Other Substantial Research Outputs') in addition to the indicators outlined in clauses (8) - (12) for inclusion in his/her MORA.

(14) Examples of Other Substantial Research Outputs include expert submissions or research reports provided to government enquiries.

(15) The method for submission and approval for these Other Substantial Research Outputs is outlined in clauses (22) - (23).

Part C - How to collect data and information associated with MORA indicators

(16) This section outlines the method to be used in the collection of data associated with MORA indicators.

HERDC Data

(17) As outlined in clause (8), HERDC data includes External Research Income and Research Publications. Collection of each will be as follows:

- a. Data associated with External Research Income will be obtained from the University finance system and Office for Research records of grants and contracts and as part of the University's annual response to and data and timeline requirements under the annual Commonwealth Government's HERDC.

(18) In addition, the Office for Research will make an annual call (usually between April and June) requesting researchers to provide new or updated information relating to External Research Income to the Office for Research in the time, manner and using any forms required by the Office for Research.

(19) Research Publications data and additional external research income will be collected as part of the University annual response to and data and timelines requirements under the Commonwealth HERDC.

Creative Work Data

(20) Researchers will be required to submit Creative Works as Research to the Office for Research usually by the last Friday in August of each year, in the manner approved by and using any forms or systems required by the Office for Research and consistent with the requirements of the VU Creative Works as Research Guidelines.

Research Student Completions Data

(21) Data associated with Research Student Completions will be recorded by the Graduate Research Centre as at 31 August of each year for the census year spanning 1 Sept of the immediately preceding year to 31 August of the current year.

Claiming for Other Substantial Research Outputs or a Internationally Preeminent Book Publisher

(22) The following information will be required to make a claim for Other Substantial Research Outputs or the quality weighting for Internationally Preeminent Book Publishers to be included in a MORA calculation:

- a. A completed application form
- b. Copies of evidence demonstrating the Other Substantial Research Output(s) or the international pre-eminence of the publisher.
- c. The proposed value of each of the Other Substantial Research Outputs (see clause 28). This requirement does not apply to publisher claims.
- d. Written endorsement from and any additional information required by the relevant College Director of Research and/or Dean for the Other Substantial Research Output(s) or the international pre-eminence of a book publisher to be recognised in the MORA
- e. Information requested by the PVC (Research and Research Training) or delegate

Process for Submission

(23) The process for claiming Other Substantial Research Outputs or Internationally Preeminent Book Publishers be recognised in the MORA Calculation will be as follows:

- a. The researcher must submit an application (see clause 22) to the Office for Research by 31 August for outputs published within 3 years immediately prior to the year the MORA calculation is made.
- b. The Office for Research will consider the application to ensure that the case is adequately documented for referral to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training).
- c. The application will be provided with a recommendation from the Office for Research on whether to approve, reject or seek further information to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) (or nominee) for his/her consideration.
- d. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) (or nominee) will either:
 - i. Approve the claim for inclusion in the MORA calculation and advise the Office for Research of his/her decision, including the value to be awarded. The Office for Research will advise the applicant.
 - ii. Reject the claim and advise the Office for Research of his/her decision. The Office for Research will advise the applicant.
 - iii. Request further information. In this case, the applicant will respond to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) (or delegate) with the additional information in the requested timeframe.

The Pro-Vice Chancellor (or nominee) will then consider the application and the new information and either approve and prescribe the value associated with each claim or reject it for inclusion in the MORA calculation and advise the Office for Research of his/her final decision. The Office for Research will advise the applicant.

Part D - College of Data Associated with Indicators and Staff allocation to Colleges

(24) In collecting data associated with MORA indicators, staff will be listed and allocated to a College according to the system produced by People and Culture and as at 31 August of each year.

Part E - Values associated with indicators

(25) This section outlines the values associated with each indicator.

Values associated with HERDC and Research Student Completions

(26) The Value associated with HERDC Indicators (External Research Income and Research Publications) and Research Students Completions will be in accordance with those outlined in the policy.

Values associated with Creative Works

(27) The value of creative works is outlined will be in accordance with those outlined in the [Creative Works as Research Guideline](#).

Other Substantial Research Outputs

(28) A case for the value of Other Substantial Research Outputs will be proposed by the applicant as part of the application process (see clause 22) and the final decision concerning the value will be made by the Pro-Vice-Chancellor as part of the process outlined in clause (23).

Part F - Quality Weightings associated with MORA Indicators

(29) This section outlines the weightings to be applied in recognition of quality to each of the values outlined in Part B. The purpose of these quality weightings is to encourage researchers to undertake and deliver research of the higher quality, including by applying for more prestigious grants, publishing in the most respected outlets and achieving superior results with Research Students

Quality Weighting associated with HERDC and Research Student Completions

(30) The Quality Weighting associated with HERDC Indicators (External Research Income and Research Publications) and Research Students Completions are as outlined the policy.

Quality Weightings associated with Creative Works

(31) The Quality Weightings associated with Creative Works will be in accordance with those outlined in the [Creative Works as Research Guideline](#).

Quality Weightings for Other Substantial Research Outputs

(32) There will be no (that is, zero) Quality Weighting applied to Other Substantial Research Outputs.

Part G - Alternative Quality Lists

(33) This section outlines the process to determine research quality and associated quality weightings to be used in accordance with Research Publications.

Alternative Output Quality Measures

The Process

(34) A written, proposed alternative to the SCImago quality index/list can be presented by a College Dean to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training). The proposal should outline (but not be limited to) the following:

- a. A detailed outline of the proposed alternative quality index/list with weightings clearly detailed

- b. Why the alternative list is being proposed
- c. The use of this list at other universities and research organisations or national recognition.
- d. Evidence that this list meets and represents the standards of the discipline or disciplines.

(35) The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) will then consider the proposal. The Pro Vice-Chancellor may request further information from the College Dean, and may seek input, advice and information from others from within the University or from external stakeholders.

(36) The Pro Vice-Chancellor will then either:

- a. approve the proposal for a maximum period of three years
- b. request amendments
- c. reject the proposal.

(37) Where amendments are requested, the College Dean will either:

- a. respond in writing with a proposal that has made the requested amendments. In such a case, the Pro Vice-Chancellor will approve the amended proposal for a maximum period of three years.
- b. Outline and provide evidence for why the requested amendments should not be made. The Pro Vice-Chancellor will then consider this and either approve the proposal for a maximum period of three years or reject the proposal. In the event of a rejection, the Pro Vice-Chancellor will provide the grounds for rejection.

(38) Approved proposals will be provided by the Pro Vice-Chancellor to the Office for Research. The Office for Research will house the quality list/index on its website, and use it in the calculation of quality weightings for MORA where appropriate. Alternative ranking systems are College specific and the application of this to journal articles will be determined by the home College of the first named VU author.

(39) It will be within the discretion of the Pro Vice-Chancellor to rescind approval for an alternative or additional quality index/list or request that the continued suitability of a list be reviewed at any time.

Request for a Change or Rescission of an Alternative Quality Index

(40) A College Dean may request a change or amendment to an approved alternative quality index or for an alternative quality index to be rescinded in favour of the SCImago index.

(41) In case of a change or amendment to an approved alternative list, the Dean must follow the process outlined clauses (37) - (38).

(42) A Dean may request to rescind an alternative quality index and adopt the SCImago quality index. In such a case, the Dean must make the request in writing to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) outlining the reasons for the rescission and providing evidence to support the request.

(43) The Pro Vice-Chancellor will either approve or reject the request. It is within the discretion of the Pro-Vice-Chancellors to seek information and advice in making his decision regarding whether or not to rescind the alternative quality index. Changes to the quality index will not apply retrospectively.

Collaboration Weightings associated with MORA Indicators

(44) This section outlines the weightings to be applied in recognition of research collaboration to each of the Indicator Values outlined in Part F.

(45) The purpose of these Collaboration Weightings is to encourage researchers to undertake and deliver research in

collaboration with other researchers (internally and externally) in recognition of the role that this plays in building and sustaining the University's research capacity and culture.

Collaboration Weightings associated with HERDC and Research Student Completions

(46) A Collaboration Weighting applies to HERDC Data as outlined in the policy.

(47) In accordance with the policy, there will be no (that is, zero) Collaboration Weighting applied to Research Student Completions.

Collaboration Weightings associated with Creative Works

(48) The Collaboration Weightings associated with Creative Works will be in accordance with those outlined in the [Creative Works as Research Guideline](#).

Collaboration Weightings associated with Other Substantial Research Outputs

(49) There will be no Collaboration Weighting applied to Other Substantial Research Outputs.

Part H - MORA Benchmark and New Staff: Waiving the right to automatic Minimum MORA

(50) New research staff may waive the right to automatically qualify for the Minimum MORA Benchmark and apply to have a MORA calculation based on their research activity at a previous institution(s).

Information Required

(51) A researcher will be required to submit the following:

- a. A completed [application form](#) providing information on Research Indicators (see Part B) that are relevant to the application. As part of this:
 - i. Research Publications written since assuming his/her appointment at Victoria University will normally be required to have Victoria University outlined in the affiliation to qualify for inclusion in the MORA calculation.
 - ii. Research funding earned or won since assuming his/her Victoria University appointment must be in a Victoria University account.
- b. Written endorsement from and information required by the relevant College Director of Research and/or Dean
- c. Information requested by the PVC (Research and Research Training) or delegate

Process for Submission

(52) The process for requesting to waive the right to automatic Minimum MORA will be as follows:

- a. The researcher must provide the information (see clause 22) to the Office for Research by 31 August
- b. The Office for Research will consider the application and ensure that all information necessary to determine the MORA calculation.
- c. The Office for Research will then report the MORA Calculation to the relevant College Director of Research and Research Training and Dean.

Annual MORA Process

(53) The University will calculate the MORA annually in the first week of November of each year.

MORA Calculation Method/Formula

(54) A MORA calculation is based upon the MORA Indicators in Part B (subject to any applicable Quality or Collaboration Weighting) over the immediate past three years.

(55) The method or formula of calculation associated with each MORA Indicator is as follows:

- a. External Research Income (applies to total project income of greater than \$0)
- b. Research income MORA points (per project) = External Research Income / \$45,000 / total number of VU Chief Investigators x research income quality weighting (if applicable) x collaboration weighting (if applicable)
- c. Research publication MORA points (per Research Publication) = research publication point / total number of authors x research publication quality weighting x collaboration weighting (if applicable)

(56) Research Students

- a. The calculation method for research students will depend on whether the Research Student was a Research Masters or a Research Doctorate student.
- b. Research Masters Student completion MORA points (per student) = 0.5 x supervision fraction x timely completion fraction x thesis quality weighting (if applicable)
- c. Research Doctorate Student completion MORA points (per student) = 1.0 x supervision fraction x timely completion fraction x thesis quality weighting (if applicable).
- d. Timely completion is 4.1 years EFT for research doctorate or PhD, and 2.1 years EFT for Masters by Research) and the "timely completion fraction" = 1.0 if timely completion, or reduced incrementally down to 0.0 for 1 year beyond timely completion.

(57) Creative Works

- a. Creative works as research MORA points (per output) - as outlined in the VU Creative Works as Research Guidelines

(58) Other substantial research outputs points (if applicable)

- a. Other substantial research output points (output) will be awarded points in accordance with the level approved in an application (see clause 22).

Part I - Office for Research responsible for Annual MORA Calculation

(59) The MORA Calculation in clauses (54) - (58) will be conducted by the Office for Research.

Release of MORA Calculation Results

(60) The Office for Research will release the results of the MORA calculation during November of the calculation year.

College Reports

(61) The Office for Research will provide a report on the MORA calculation to each College Dean and Research Director.

Staff access to MORA Results

(62) Staff may access their MORA results online through the QUEST research system.

Request for Recalculation of MORA

(63) Where a researcher suspects errors or incorrect calculation of his/her MORA, then he/she may seek a recalculation. The process is as follows:

- a. The researcher must contact the Office for Research by the last Friday in March following the year of the MORA calculation, including provide evidence to support the claim, including the support of his/her College Dean and Director of Research.
- b. The Office for Research will then either:
 - i. Agree to the request for recalculation
 - ii. Reject the request
 - iii. Ask for further information. In this case, the researcher will be required to provide the Office for Research with the additional information in the requested timeframe. The Office for Research will then consider the application and the new information and either approve or reject the request for a recalculation in the MORA.
- c. Where a request has been rejected, the researcher may submit the request to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training). The Pro Vice-Chancellor will the either:
 - i. Approve the request for recalculation
 - ii. Reject the request for recalculation
 - iii. Ask for further information. In this case, the researcher will be required to provide the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) with the additional information in the requested timeframe. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) will then consider the application and the new information and either approve or reject the request for a recalculation in the MORA.

(64) The provisions in this section apply only to the current MORA result.

Part J - Changes to collection method and/or values and implications for MORA calculation

(65) Where a change is made to:

- a. the indicators to be included in the MORA
- b. the value associated with a MORA indicator
- c. the value given for Collaboration Weightings associated with a MORA indicator
- d. the values provided for Quality Weightings associated with a MORA indicator
- e. the time or dates associated with collection of data associated with MORA indicators
- f. any alternative quality index used for calculation
- g. changes in the SCLmago quality for a given year

then those changes will apply only to the current and future (where applicable) MORA calculation year and will not be applied retrospectively.

(66) For example, a change to the Quality Weighting for research income in 2014 will apply only to income received in 2014 and not to income in 2013 or 2012.

Section 6 - Guidelines

(67) [Creative Works as Research Guideline](#)

Status and Details

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