

Measuring Individual Research Activity Policy

Section 1 - Purpose / Objectives

(1) The University measures the individual research activity of academic staff. The measure, known as the Measure of Research Activity (MORA), uses established and verifiable research metrics. MORA may be used to assist with individual employee planning and development, determining time made available to individual academics for research purposes as well as for profiling the University's research productivity and performance in order to assist the University to achieve its research goals.

(2) The policy details the requirements for measuring research activity (MORA) and replaces the previously used Research Activity Index Policy.

Section 2 - Scope / Application

(3) This policy applies to:

- a. Academic staff of Victoria University employed in teaching and research and research only positions as a means to measure their research activity.

(4) This policy does not apply to:

- a. Sessional staff.

Section 3 - Definitions

(5) Collaborators: All Chief Investigators on a project including external researchers.

(6) Creative Works Collection: The annual collection of creative research works conducted by the Office for Research in accordance with Victoria University's Creative Arts Research Works Guidelines.

(7) Income: Income that is deemed eligible for inclusion in the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) and which is shown in the University's financial accounts. The net amount will reflect transfers to and from other institutions.

(8) New Staff: Teaching and Research and Research only staff who have not held a position of employment at Victoria University within the 3 years immediately prior to the year the calculation is made.

(9) Publications: Publications that are deemed eligible for inclusion and measurement in the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC).

(10) Period: The 3 years immediately prior to the year the calculation is made.

(11) Research: Research is defined as the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, understandings, inventions and applications of this knowledge. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it leads to new and creative outcomes. This definition of research encompasses pure and strategic basic research, applied research and experimental development. Applied research is original investigation undertaken to acquire new knowledge but directed towards a specific, practical aim or objective (including a client-driven purpose) and which may include patentable inventions or innovations.

- a. This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development (R&D) as comprising of creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, including knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.
- b. Activities that do not satisfy the definition of research include:
 - i. scientific and technical information services;
 - ii. general purpose or routine data collection;
 - iii. standardisation and routine testing;
 - iv. feasibility studies (except into research and experimental development projects);
 - v. specialised routine medical care;
 - vi. commercial, legal and administrative aspects of patenting, copyright or licensing activities; and
 - vii. routine computer programming, systems work or software maintenance.

(12) Timely Completion: Refers to a Research degree that is completed in a timely manner. In equivalent full-time (EFT) terms, from initial enrolment to submission for examination. A Timely Completion is as follows: 4.1 years or less for Research Doctorates and 2.1 years or less for Research Masters.

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(13) The research productivity of academic staff will be measured using the Measure of Research Activity (MORA).

(14) MORA calculations are based upon recognized research outputs and research activity over a Period as follows:

- a. External Research Income;
- b. Research Publications (A1 Books, B Book Chapters, C1 Refereed Journal Articles, E1 Refereed Conference Publications, Recognised Creative Arts Research Works);
- c. Research Student Completions (Research Doctorates and Masters by Research).

The value assigned to each of the above indicators is detailed in the procedure associated with this policy.

Staff cannot achieve their benchmark solely through Research student completions.

Only activity and outputs arising from Research will be recognized for the purpose of MORA.

Only Income and Publications which are reported by the University as part of the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) and recognised creative works will be included in the MORA calculation.

Only Research doctorate students supervised to completion within 5 years (equivalent full-time) and Research masters students supervised to completion within 3 years (equivalent full-time) will earn points.

The minimum benchmark for a full-time member of academic staff undertaking a teaching and research role is as follows:

Table 1: MORA Benchmarks

Appointment Level	MORA Benchmark (minimum)
Level A	0.5
Level B	1.0
Level C	2.0
Level D	3.0
Level E	4.0

Staff with a greater allocation of Research time will be expected to achieve a greater MORA Measure.

Quality weightings

The quality of Victoria University's Research is valued for the benefit it brings to our academic, industry, community and government partners along with the benefit it brings to our institutional and individual Research reputations, future opportunities and productivity. For this reason, a quality weighting will be applied to selected Research outputs as detailed in Table 2.

Research books where a rigorous peer-review process can be demonstrated may be awarded additional points. Quality weightings will be applied to refereed journal articles and conference publications quality weightings in accordance with Table 2.

Collaboration weightings

The University values and seeks to encourage and reward Research collaboration. Additional weightings are therefore applied to Research outputs achieved through collaboration as detailed in Table 2.

Table 2 MORA Calculation Methodology

	Research Income	Research Publications	Research student completions
Definition	Consistent with the HERDC definition which applied at the time of reporting that income to the Commonwealth. Only Category 1, 2, 3 & 4 income will be included.	Consistent with the HERDC definition which applied at the time of reporting that publication to the Commonwealth. Creative Works accepted as part of the University's Creative Arts Research Works Collection. Documentation may be required to support any other publication outputs	As per the Graduate Research Centre definition for Research Doctorates and Research Masters.
Rules	Only VU HERDC reported income will be included. New Staff can include verifiable data from relevant, non VU, years of employment Amount included = net income invoiced & receipted by VU in the calendar year. Income is equally shared among VU CIs listed in the funding agreement.	Only VU HERDC reported publications will be included. New Staff can include verifiable data from relevant, non VU, years of employment The staff member must be named as an author on the publication. Publication points are distributed in equal proportions amongst the authors. A1 Peer reviewed book requires additional evidence above typical HERDC specifications. The publication of a book must include quality control processes such as expert assessment or review, as well as editing, copy-editing, design, and conversion of the work into an appropriate format	Only research student completions at VU can be included. Points will be awarded in the year the student is classified. Points will be awarded to supervisors who have actively contributed to the completion; this will normally be those supervisors at the time of submission.

Points (per MORA Exercise)	\$45,000 (cumulative total of external income) = 1 pt Amounts over \$45,000 are added as a proportion of a pt	A1 Peer Reviewed Book: 3.33 pts A1 Book: 1.66 pts B Book chapter: 0.33 pt C1 Refereed Journal Articles: 0.33 pt E1 Fully Refereed Conference Papers in disciplines where conference publications are the primary vehicle for academic publishing: 0.33 pt	Research Doctorates & PhD: 1 pt per student FTE if completed within 4.1 years (equivalent full-time) Masters by Research: 0.5 pts per student FTE if completed within 2.1 years equivalent full-time. Research student completion points will be reduced incrementally up to and including 12 months (for Research Doctorates & PhDs) and 6 months (for Research Masters) after the timely completion period. Completions which occur after this period will receive nil points. The distribution of points will be reflective of the supervision load of each formally listed supervisor.
Quality weightings (multipliers)	Category 1 Research Income attracts 1.50 weighting (ie add 50%)	Scimago Rank Quartile 1 journals attract multiplier of 6.0, Quartile 2 attract a multiplier of 4.0, Quartile 3 attract a multiplier of 2.0 Quartile 4 journals and unlisted journals do not receive a quality weighting but still attract the standard C1 points. Where there is a nationally recognized, discipline based, journal quality position not reflected in the Scimago JR system, a case can be made for inclusion by a College.	Where a thesis is given an average score from the examiners of 2 or less a quality weighting of 1.25 will be applied to the completion points.
Collaboration weightings (multipliers)	Contracts with multiple CIs attract a collaboration weighting of 1.25 (ie add 25%).	Publications with multiple authors attract a collaboration weighting of 1.25 (ie add 25%)	Not applicable

Variables, Exemptions & Reduced MORA Categories

New Staff to Victoria University, appointed to a Teaching and Research position through a competitive process, will normally qualify for their benchmark for a period of three years provided that a full curriculum vitae and list of research publications is provided to the Office for Research. New staff can apply to exceed the benchmark but will need to submit documentation to the Office for Research for evaluation. Research funding received and publications submitted from the time of taking up an appointment at VU will normally need to have the staff member's affiliation identified as VU to be included in the MORA calculation.

Researchers may request recognition for other substantial, verifiable Research outputs. These requests should be made through the relevant College Director, Research & Research Training and require approval from the PVC (Research & Research Training) or nominee. Research outputs likely to be approved include book chapters reporting original research but lacking a commercial publisher, expert submissions and research reports relating to government enquiries.

Section 5 - Procedures

The following procedures are used to support this policy:

- a. [Measure of Research Activity \(MORA\) Procedures](#)

Section 6 - Guidelines

[Creative Works as Research Guidelines](#)

Status and Details

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