

Measuring Individual Research Activity Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Objectives

(1) This Policy will establish Victoria University's model for the measurement of individual academic research activity. The model will include performance benchmarks for academic levels based on external, discipline specific data sourced from the most recent Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) or equivalent national research evaluation system. Measurements may be utilised to inform a range of University initiatives, including the allocation of research workloads to staff, assist in individual employee planning and development, and to profile the University's research productivity and performance.

Section 2 - Scope and Application

(2) This Policy applies to:

- a. Academic staff of Victoria University employed in Teaching & Research and Research Only positions.

(3) This Policy does not apply to:

- a. Sessional staff
- b. Teaching only academics.

Section 3 - Definitions

(4) Field of Research: this Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classification code classifies research according to the research undertaken, rather than the purpose of the activity. It describes what the academic is researching.

(5) New Staff: Teaching & Research and Research Only academic staff who have not held an academic position of employment at Victoria University for the full three years immediately prior to the year that the calculation is made.

(6) Reference Period: Research will be measured over the most recent multi-year period (defined in the accompanying Procedure) for which audited data is available.

(7) 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.

- a. This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development, including creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, such as

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.

(8) Research Income: Income from external sources shown in the University's financial accounts that is eligible and has been submitted by Victoria University for inclusion in the Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC). The net amount will reflect transfers to and from other institutions.

(9) Research Indicators: Comprise Research Income, Research Publications and Higher Degree by Research Student Completions.

(10) Research Publications: Research output that meets the definition of research and has been published or made publicly available within the reference period, submitted and/or claimed in VU Elements and accepted for the University's annual research publication collection, including recognised Creative Works as Research.

(11) Research Publications as Creative Works: Creative works submitted and accepted through the University's Creative Works as Research annual collection process.

(12) Research Student Completions: The reported completion of a Research Doctorate or a Masters by Research program at Victoria University.

(13) Research Training: Occurs when an academic staff member has responsibility as registered research supervisor for overseeing the development of a researcher who is enrolled in a Higher Degree by Research program of the University (eg. Research Doctorate or Research Masters).

(14) Timely Completion: Is assessed based on the time, in equivalent full-time (EFT) terms, from a graduate research student's initial enrolment to the date at which their thesis is submitted for examination. A 'timely' completion is considered to be one where the submission occurs within 4.1 years (EFT) for Research Doctorates and within 2.1 years (EFT) for Research Masters.

Section 4 - Policy Statement

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

(16) Only activity and outputs which meet the definition of research and arise from Research and Research Training will be recognised for the purposes of MORA.

(17) MORA calculations are based upon recognised and audited Research Indicators over the reference period as follows:

- a. Research Income
- b. Research Publications; and
- c. Timely Research Student Completions.

(18) Values, quality and strategic weightings will be assigned to the research indicators.

(19) MORA incorporates nationally referenced performance benchmarks tailored to specific fields of research. These benchmarks are formulated according to the most recent ERA or equivalent data set. The underlying formulae include calibrations to account for skewness in the data.

(20) Staff will choose their individual field of research profile from a list of fields of research determined by their College, and in accordance with their own and their College's strategic research direction.

(21) Each benchmark will include an expectation ratio per academic level to account for the increased capabilities and expectations associated with higher academic levels.

(22) The impact of extended periods of parental, personal (sick or carer's) leave taken by staff, during the reference period or in the half year before, will be taken into consideration in a staff member's MORA score.

(23) The following document has been referenced in this Policy:

- a. State of Australian University Research 2015-16: Volume 1 ERA National Report

Section 5 - Procedure

(24) The following Procedure is used to support this Policy:

- a. [Measuring Individual Research Activity Procedures](#)

Section 6 - Guideline

(25) The following Guideline is used to support this Policy:

- a. [Measuring Individual Research Activity - Creative Works as Research Guideline](#)

Status and Details

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