

<b>Name of Guidelines</b>	<b>Research Performance Review and Plan Guidelines</b>
<b>Description of Guidelines</b>	These guidelines outline the practical implementation and application of the research workload allocation process incorporated in the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2017-2021 and the Academic Workload Policy.
<b>Guidelines apply to</b>	Academic Staff Only
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## Introduction

These guidelines support the application of the individual research workload allocation processes described in the **Academic Workload Policy** (the [Policy](#)) and should be read in conjunction with the [Policy](#). Consistent with the [Policy](#), these guidelines apply to Academic Staff (Level A to Level E) who are seeking an individual research workload allocation (X<sub>3</sub>).

These guidelines provide an overview of the process to assign an individual research workload to Academic Staff and cover the following key elements:

- the submission options available for the Research Performance Review and Plan (RPRP) and individual research workload allocation process, including the Standard/full, Expedited and Streamlined submission options;
- the research quality measures for citation and peer review disciplines;
- the membership and role of the Faculty Research Workload Review Panel (FRWRP); and
- the process for recommending an individual research workload allocation for a new staff member who commences with ACU following the annual process.

These guidelines provide clarity to the process for an individual research workload allocation (X<sub>3</sub>) only.

The [Policy](#) outlines the range of research workload allocations that can make up an Academic Staff members full research workload allocation. The other research workload allocations are as follows:

- X<sub>1</sub> Staff undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy where it is a probationary criterion;
- X<sub>2</sub> Allocation for Early Career Researchers (defined in the [Policy](#));
- X<sub>4</sub> Allocation for staff supervising Master of Philosophy or other research Master's degree;
- X<sub>5</sub> Allocation for staff supervising Doctor of Philosophy or other research doctoral degree;
- X<sub>6</sub> Allocation for Research Projects – Other (Approved by the Executive Dean); or
- X<sub>7</sub> Allocation for staff undertaking Assistant supervisor supervision of Research Students.

All other research workload allocations are allocated in line with discussions between the staff member and their supervisor. An Academic staff member's total research workload allocation could include all allocations under X<sub>1</sub>-X<sub>7</sub> outlined in the [Policy](#).

### What does an individual research workload (X<sub>3</sub>) cover?

The individual research workload (X<sub>3</sub>) is workload allocated to the staff member to achieve current and planned quality publications. Work identified in externally funded grants and/or ACU Research Fund (ACURF) grants outlined in the RPRP.

In circumstances where an external grant incorporates a fraction of time that has been endorsed by the funding body, this should be outlined in the RPRP.

In the event that an external grant or funded research project is confirmed after the X3 allocation has been advised and the time commitment is not covered by the X3 allocation, the Academic Staff member should consult with their nominated supervisor and/or National Head of School (NHoS) and submit a request for a revised X3 allocation to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research (DVC Research) via the relevant Associate Dean Research (ADR), who will liaise with the Executive Dean.

Please note – as per the [Policy](#), the total of all research workload allocations, in addition to all other workload allocations for teaching and academic administration/leadership, should not normally exceed the annual workload allocation total of 1595 hours (for full-time staff).

## Overview

The purpose of the [Policy](#) is to align workload allocation for academic activities within the entitlements and conditions of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2017 - 2021 (the [Agreement](#)), and in the context of the University's strategic priorities.

The application of these guidelines provides transparency of process for research workload allocations that occurs through a review of the staff member's past research performance and their future research plans, together with evidence of their research quality.

## Research Performance Review and Plan, Evidence of Research Quality and Research Workload Allocation Process

As identified in the [Policy](#), any Academic Staff member seeking an individual research workload (X3) will normally need to submit a rolling three (3) year research plan. The RPRP has been developed to meet the requirements of the Agreement and Section 10.2 of the [Policy](#).

Each year of operation an annual call will occur for the submission of a rolling three (3) year plan, incorporating an annual review of the previous plan reporting on research project milestones and on the overall status of the previous plan.

For eligible staff, there are three (3) alternate submission options:

- Expedited – available to staff who were assessed with a Research Quality Rating (RQR) of 5 well above world standard from their RPRP in the previous calendar year;
- Streamlined A - available to staff who were assessed with a RQR of 5 – well above world standard, or 4 – above world standard from their RPRP in the previous calendar year; and
- Streamlined B - available to staff who were assessed with a RQR of 3 – at world standard or 1-2 – below world standard from their RPRP in the previous calendar year.

The options available to Academic Staff are based on the assessment of the RQR (between 1 and 5) the staff member received in their RPRP in the previous calendar year. Further details

on the alternative submission options are included later in this document. For further guidance on RQRs, please refer to the table at Appendix 1.

Eligible staff may utilise the most relevant alternative submission option (i.e. Expedited or Streamlined A or B) until such time that the DVC Research and/or relevant ADR determine that there is not sufficient information to successfully review and make an informed assessment of the submission. When this occurs, the Academic Staff member would then utilise the Standard/full submission.

Academic Staff members seeking a research workload allocation should discuss their research plans with their nominated supervisor or NHoS or ADR where appropriate, and then prepare and submit (via the most appropriate submission option for their circumstances) their RPRP to their supervisor.

The Academic Staff member's nominated supervisor (or NHOS where appropriate), provides guidance to the staff member on the development of their RPRP (with the exception of the Expedited submission option). The supervisor may provide additional comments in the submission where relevant to do so.,

With reference to the annual review, the staff member will report on their achievement against the plan and outline any changes proposed for existing project outcomes and milestones and add additional projects as required into the rolling three (3) year plan.

With the exception of the Expedited submissions, following the supervisor's declaration, the RPRP is submitted for review by the relevant officer for the applicable submission option, the DVC Research, or the relevant ADR or the Faculty Research Workload Review Panel (FRWRP).

The outcome of a RPRP can include a multi year allocation, up to 3 years. In these circumstances, an annual progress report on the approved plan is required. If a staff member seeks a review of their X3 workload allocation during the multi year allocation, a Standard / Full RPRP needs to be submitted in line with the process identified.

## Research Performance Review and Plan submission options

The University has developed the RPRP template as an online form, accessible via the [RPRP SharePoint site](#).

### Submission options timelines

In 2019, the phased timeline is expected to be as follows:

- Expedited:
  - Opens for submission 29 April;
  - Submission period closes 10 May;
  - DVC Research consideration between 13 May and 17 May; and
  - Outcomes advised to Academic Staff in the week commencing 27 May;

- Streamlined A and B:
  - Opens for submission 6 May;
  - Submission period closes 7 June;
  - ADR, Executive Dean and DVC Research consideration between 11 June to 28 June; and
  - Outcomes advised to Academic Staff in the week commencing 1 July;
- Standard / full process:
  - Opens for submission 6 May;
  - Submission period closes 12 July;
  - FRWRP consideration between 22 July and 23 August;
  - DVC Research consideration between 26 August and 27 September;
  - Finalisation of X<sub>3</sub> recommendations between DVC Research and the Faculties between 30 September and 11 October; and
  - Outcomes advised to Academic Staff in the week commencing 14 October.

## **Expedited submission** (research quality rating of 5 in the immediately preceding calendar year)

### **Eligibility**

The Expedited submission option is available to:

- Academic Staff who were assessed with a RQR of 5 for their RPRP submission in the previous calendar year.

### **Submission conditions**

- The Academic Staff member must select an Expedited assessment; and
- Should be aware that the resulting X<sub>3</sub> research workload allocated would normally be between 801 to 1435 hours, the range applicable for a RQR of 5 (please refer to Appendix 2); and
- Should the DVC Research assess that a RQR of 5 has not been maintained, a RQR of 4 may be allocated with the resulting X<sub>3</sub> research workload allocation being normally between 680-800; or advise the staff member to complete a Standard/full RPRP submission, and

It must be noted that the hours allocated under X<sub>3</sub> for the following calendar year could potentially remain the same, increase or decrease within the research workload allocation range associated with the allocated RQR.

### **Other submission options available**

An Academic Staff member, who received a RQR of 5 for their RPRP submission in the previous calendar year, could instead select one of the following submission options:

- Streamlined A; or
- The Standard/full RPRP submission.

### **Expedited submission process**

An Academic Staff member seeking to complete an Expedited submission would select the Expedited online template.

The staff member would then:

- check their pre-populated employment data and pre-populated research plan data from their previous calendar year RPRP;
- Comment on their progress to date against the plan submitted in the previous year's RPRP;
- Add any new projects to their three (3) year rolling plan;
- Provide evidence of a demonstrated commitment to the pursuit of external funding, which may include information about unsuccessful grant applications and their ranking, for example top 10%, 25% or 50% etc, and
- The staff member would then complete the employee declaration and formally submit the Expedited RPRP via the online template workflow.

### **Expedited submission review**

All Expedited RPRP submissions will be reviewed and assessed by the DVC Research.

Utilising the evidence available to the Office of the DVC Research (ODVCR) - i.e. ACU Orion and Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) data; citation data (where applicable for citation disciplines<sup>1</sup>) and Scopus data, an assessment will be made of the Academic Staff member's research progress since the previous year's review.

The DVC Research will confirm the Academic Staff member's RQR and X3 research workload allocation, the number of years of the allocation and any relevant feedback, for the Faculty or Academic Staff member to the Executive Dean. The Executive Dean or appropriate delegate, i.e. ADR or NHoS will notify the Academic Staff member of the outcome and provide any relevant feedback. Staff are encouraged to discuss the outcome with their supervisor, NHoS or ADR where more detailed feedback would be helpful for future submissions.

The approved X3 research workload allocations will be forwarded to HR where the X3 allocations will be entered (when available) into the Academic Workload Planning System (AWPS) for the following calendar year.

Please note - should the DVC Research believe that there is not sufficient information to successfully review and make an informed assessment of an Expedited RPRP submission, the DVC Research will contact the relevant ADR with a copy to the Executive Dean and/or the staff member and advise the staff member to complete a Standard/full RPRP submission.

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<sup>1</sup> For further information on citation disciplines, citation data and its use, please refer to the 'Citation disciplines' section later in these Guidelines.

## Streamlined submission A (research quality rating of 5 or 4 in the immediately preceding calendar year)

### Eligibility

The Streamlined A submission option is available to:

- Academic Staff who were assessed with a RQR of 5 or 4 for their RPRP submission in the previous calendar year.

### Submission conditions

- The Academic Staff member selects a Streamlined A assessment; and
- Should not be seeking a change in their RQR (i.e. if the staff member received a 4 in the preceding year's RPRP, they should not be seeking a 5 through the Streamlined A process); and
- Should be aware that the resulting X3 research workload allocated would normally be between 801 to 1435 hours, the range applicable for a RQR of 5 or 680 to 800, the range applicable for a RQR of 4 (please refer to Appendix 2).
- However, should the DVCR assess that a RQR has improved a RQR one level higher may be allocated, with the resulting X3 workload being within that allocation range or, alternatively, should the DVCR assess that a RQR has not been maintained a RQR one level lower may be allocated, with the resulting X3 workload being within that allocation range; the DVCR may also request a Standard/Full RPRP submission.
- It must be noted that the hours allocated under X3 for the following calendar year could potentially remain the same, increase or decrease within the research workload allocation range associated with the allocated RQR;
- Academic Staff in peer review disciplines<sup>2</sup> must have averaged one (1) publication point<sup>3</sup> per annum during the five (5) year review period (2015 to 2019) in:
  - Outlets rated a 5 (or equivalent) in the relevant Faculty's approved journal/publisher quality lists **plus** 75-80% of all outputs at a 5 during the review period – for staff who received a RQR of 5 for their previous calendar year's RPRP submission; or
  - Outlets rated a 4 (or equivalent) in the relevant Faculty's approved journal/publisher quality lists **plus** 75 -80% of all outputs at a 4 during the review period – for staff who received a RQR of 4 for their previous calendar year's RPRP submission;

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<sup>2</sup> For further information on peer review disciplines and Faculty quality journal and publisher lists, please refer to the 'Peer Review disciplines' section later in these Guidelines.

<sup>3</sup> Publication Points – A1 output = 5 points if sole authored and 1 point jointly if co-authored. B1 or C1 = 1 point – whether sole authored or co-authored.

- Academic Staff in citation disciplines<sup>4</sup> must have averaged one (1) publication point<sup>5</sup> per annum during the five (5) year review period (2015 to 2019) **plus**:
  - Have a citation profile comparable to an ERA 5 – for staff who received a RQR of 5 or a citation profile comparable to an ERA 4 – for staff who received a RQR of 4 for their previous calendar year’s RPRP submission (respectively).

### **Other submission options available**

An Academic Staff member, who was assessed with a RQR of 5 for their RPRP submission in the previous calendar year, could instead select one of the following submission options:

- Expedited; or
- The Standard/full RPRP submission.

An Academic Staff member, who was assessed with a RQR of 4 for their RPRP submission in the previous calendar year, could instead select:

- The Standard/full RPRP submission.

### **Streamlined A submission process**

An Academic Staff member seeking to complete a Streamlined A submission would select the Streamlined A online template.

The staff member would then:

- check their pre-populated employment data and pre-populated research plan data from their previous calendar year RPRP;
- Comment on their progress to date against the plan submitted in the previous year’s RPRP;
- Add any new projects to their three (3) year rolling plan;
- Outline any upcoming publications making reference to the Faculty approved quality journal/publisher list information for peer review disciplines; and/or
- For Academic Staff in citation disciplines, provide citation and/or Scopus data for the publications during the past 5 years, removing any non-C1 and non-B1 papers, to calculate citations per paper and/or citation trends;
- Provide evidence of a demonstrated commitment to the pursuit of external funding which may include information about unsuccessful grant applications and their ranking, for example top 10%, 25% or 50% etc, and submit the Streamlined A RPRP to their nominated supervisor for comment via the online template workflow.

The nominated supervisor will confirm receipt of the plan or return the submission to the staff member via the ‘Revise/Rework’ option if any additional revision/clarification is required.

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<sup>4</sup> For further information on citation disciplines, citation data and its use, please refer to the ‘Citation disciplines’ section later in these Guidelines.

<sup>5</sup> Publication Points – A1 output = 5 points if sole authored and 1 point jointly if co-authored. B1 or C1 = 1 point – whether sole authored or co-authored.

Following the Supervisor Declaration the submission is formally submitted via the online template workflow.

### **Streamlined A submission review**

All Streamlined A RPRP submissions will be reviewed and assessed initially by the relevant ADR.

The ADR will assess:

- Publication data from the ACU Orion report:
  - For peer review disciplines, reference to the Faculty approved journal/publisher quality lists; or
  - Citation data and/or Scopus data for citation disciplines;
- A demonstrated commitment to the pursuit of external funding - via the ACU Orion report and any other provided evidence:
  - For Academic Staff at Level D and E, there is a normal expectation of grant income well above the ERA benchmarked grant data<sup>6</sup>;
  - For Academic Staff at Level C, there is a normal expectation of some grant income; and
  - For Academic Staff at Level A and B, there is not an expectation of grant income.

Further, the ADR will be looking for evidence of a demonstrated capability to submit competitive, if not always successful, research grant applications.

The ADR will recommend an X<sub>3</sub> research workload allocation for consideration and review by both the Executive Dean and DVC Research.

The DVC Research will review and consider the research workload recommendations. The recommendations will be confirmed or adjusted. The DVCR will also determine the number of years that the X<sub>3</sub> allocation is to apply i.e. whether for 1,2 or 3 years . Should a recommendation be adjusted, the DVC Research will provide feedback regarding the decision to the ADR with a copy to the Executive Dean that includes and whether the plan is approved or not approved for a X<sub>3</sub> workload allocation.

The Executive Dean (or appropriate delegate, i.e. ADR or NHoS) will notify the Academic Staff member of the outcome and provide any relevant feedback including actions that may improve the staff member's RQR in future submissions. Staff are encouraged to discuss the outcome with their supervisor, NHoS or ADR where more detailed feedback would be helpful for future submissions.

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<sup>6</sup> For ERA benchmarked data, please refer to Appendix 4

The approved X<sub>3</sub> research workload allocations will be forwarded to HR where the X<sub>3</sub> allocations will be entered (when available) into the AWPS for the following calendar year.

Please note - should the ADR in consultation with the DVC Research believe that there is not sufficient information to successfully review and make an informed assessment of a Streamlined A RPRP submission, the ADR and/or DVC Research will contact the relevant staff member with a copy to the Executive Dean and advise the staff member to complete the Standard/full RPRP submission.

## **Streamlined submission B (research quality rating of 3 or 1-2 in the immediately preceding calendar year)**

### **Eligibility**

The Streamlined B submission option is available to:

- Academic Staff who were assessed with a RQR of 3 or 1-2 for their RPRP submission in the previous calendar year.

### **Submission conditions**

- The Academic Staff member must select a Streamlined B assessment; and
- Should not be seeking a change in their RQR (i.e. if the staff member received a 3 in the preceding year's RPRP, they should not be seeking a 4 or 5 through the Streamlined process etc.); and
- Should be aware that the resulting X<sub>3</sub> research workload allocated would normally be between 200 to 640 hours, the range applicable for a RQR of 3, or, between 0 to 180, the range applicable for a RQR of 1-2 (please refer to Appendix 2);
- However, should the DVCR assess that a RQR has improved a RQR one level higher may be allocated, with the resulting X<sub>3</sub> workload being within that allocation range or, alternatively, should the DVCR assess that a RQR has not been maintained a RQR one level lower may be allocated, with the resulting X<sub>3</sub> workload being within that allocation range; the DVCR may also request a Standard/Full RPRP submission.
- A RQR of one (1) level lower is not available when the preceding year's RQR was assessed as one (1);
- It must be noted that the hours allocated under X<sub>3</sub> for the following calendar year could potentially remain the same, increase or decrease within the research workload allocation range associated with the RQR.

### **Other submission option available**

An Academic Staff member, who was assessed with a RQR of 3 or 1-2 for their RPRP submission in the previous calendar year, could instead select the Standard/full RPRP submission if seeking an increase in their RQR and associated X<sub>3</sub> research workload allocation.

### **Streamlined B submission process**

An Academic Staff member seeking to complete a Streamlined B submission would select the Streamlined B online template.

The staff member would then:

- check their pre-populated employment data and pre-populated research plan data from their previous calendar year RPRP;
- Comment on their progress to date against the plan submitted in the previous year's RPRP;
- Add any new projects to their three (3) year rolling plan;
- Provide details of any new research grants, including applications under consideration and in preparation, or information about unsuccessful grant applications and their ranking, for example top 10%, 25% or 50% etc.;
- Provide a statement describing how their current research achievements maintains / improves from their achievement in the 2018 review **and** examine the difference between their research quality in 2014 (the last year prior to the current five-year review period, (2015 to 2019) and research outcomes in 2019; and
- Then submit the Streamlined B RPRP to their nominated supervisor via the online template workflow.

The nominated supervisor will confirm receipt of the plan or return the submission to the staff member via the 'Revise/Rework' option if any additional revision/clarification is required.

Following the Supervisor Declaration the submission is formally submitted via the online template workflow.

### **Streamlined B submission review**

All Streamlined B RPRP submissions will be reviewed and assessed initially by the relevant ADR.

The ADR will assess:

- Publication data from the ACU Orion report:
  - For peer review disciplines, reference to the current Faculty approved journal/publisher quality lists; or
  - citation data and/or Scopus data for citation disciplines;
- Evidence of new research funding (including under consideration and in preparation); and
- The research quality statement outlining key differences/improvements between research outputs in 2014 and research outputs in 2019.

The ADR will recommend an X3 research workload allocation for consideration and review by both the Executive Dean and DVC Research.

The DVC Research will review and consider the research workload recommendations. The recommendations will be confirmed or adjusted. The DVCR will also determine the number of years that the X<sub>3</sub> allocation is to apply i.e. whether for 1,2 or 3 years. Should a recommendation be adjusted, the DVC Research will provide feedback regarding the decision and whether the plan is approved or not approved for a X<sub>3</sub> workload allocation to the ADR with a copy to the Executive Dean.

The Executive Dean (or appropriate delegate, i.e. ADR or NHoS) will notify the Academic Staff member of the outcome and provide any relevant feedback including actions that may improve the staff member's RQR in future submissions. Staff are encouraged to discuss the outcome with their supervisor, NHoS or ADR where more detailed feedback would be helpful for future submissions.

The approved X<sub>3</sub> research workload allocations will be forwarded to HR where the X<sub>3</sub> allocations will be entered (when available) into the AWPS for the following calendar year.

Please note - should the ADR in consultation with the DVC Research believe that there is not sufficient information to successfully review and make an informed assessment of a Streamlined B RPRP submission, the ADR and/or DVC Research will contact the relevant staff member with a copy to the Executive Dean and advise the staff member to complete the Standard/full RPRP submission.

## Standard / full RPRP

### Eligibility

The full RPRP submission process is the standard submission option and it is available for:

- Academic Staff who have not previously submitted or completed a RPRP; and/or
- Academic Staff new to ACU; and/or
- Academic Staff who have previously submitted a RPRP but **did not** submit a RPRP in the immediately preceding calendar year; and/or
- Academic Staff who submitted a RPRP in previous calendar year, who are seeking an increase in their RQR (and associated potential increase in X<sub>3</sub> research hours associated with a higher RQR); and/or
- Academic Staff who have elected the Expedited or Streamlined RPRP process (A or B) and who have been advised either during or following that process to submit a full RPRP submission by the DVC Research and/or Associate Dean Research.

For further guidance on the potential X<sub>3</sub> research workload ranges associated with the relevant RQR, please refer to the table at Appendix 2.

### Submission conditions

- The Academic Staff member must be seeking an X<sub>3</sub> research workload in the following calendar year; and
- Must be aware that the resulting X<sub>3</sub> research workload allocated could be anywhere between 0 and 1435 hours, based on their RQR (please refer to Appendix 2).

For Academic Staff who submitted a RPRP in in the preceding calendar year, it must be noted that this could result in an X<sub>3</sub> research workload allocation that is the same, an increase or a decrease on their previous X<sub>3</sub> allocation.

### Other submission options available

Academic Staff who have not previously submitted a RPRP; Academic Staff who are seeking an increase in their RQR; Academic Staff who previously submitted a RPRP, but not in the immediately preceding calendar year or new Academic Staff members:

- No alternative submission options are available.

For Academic Staff members, who received a RQR for their previous year's RPRP submission, could instead select one of the following submission options (subject to meeting the eligibility and submission conditions identified above):

- Expedited;
- Streamlined A; or
- Streamlined B.

### **Full RPRP submission process**

The standard RPRP essentially consists of two components – a review of the Academic staff member’s research performance and the Academic staff member’s research plan for the next three (3) years.

### **Research Performance Review**

The research performance review of the standard RPRP will consider the previous five (5) years including the year of submission, or another specified review period if the Academic Staff member is an Early Career Researcher (ECR). The review consists of the following components:

1. An analysis of the academic staff member’s previous research outcomes, incorporating the Orion Report, which includes information from the University’s ERA data for eligible<sup>7</sup> research outputs which provides information on:
  - Externally Funded projects;
  - Publications<sup>8</sup> that the staff member was a contributor to or their Non-Traditional Research Outputs<sup>9</sup>;
2. the Academic Staff member’s research opportunity statement; and
3. the Academic Staff member’s research quality evidence, which could include for example, an analysis of citation data such as a citation report from Scopus. For further information on research quality evidence and making a case for research quality, please refer to the Evidence of Research Quality section later in this document.

### **Research Plan**

The second component of the standard RPRP is the rolling three (3) year research plan. Using the template provided, an Academic Staff member can outline the current and proposed research project/s that they plan to undertake in the next three (3) year period. The plan describes the expected outcomes and milestones for each project.

### **Full RPRP submission review**

Each Faculty will establish a FRWRP to consider the RPRPs and make research workload recommendations to the DVC Research for approval. For further information on the role and membership of the FRWRP, please refer to the Faculty Research Workload Review Panel section later in this document.

The FRWRP will recommend a RQR and X<sub>3</sub> research workload for each staff member for consideration and approval by the DVC Research.

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<sup>7</sup> HERDC publications

<sup>8</sup> HERDC publications

<sup>9</sup> Non-Traditional Research Outputs (NTROs) are to be submitted, verified and assessed in accordance with the relevant Faculty Policy on NTROs. Submissions are to be recorded in Research Master but verification must be at Faculty and Research Services levels. In addition to submitting an Orion report, a copy of the assessor’s comments on each successful NTRo should be included in the submission.

The DVC Research will review and consider the research workload recommendations. The recommendations will be confirmed or adjusted. Should a recommendation be adjusted, the DVC Research will provide feedback regarding the decision to the FRWRP including whether the plan is approved or not approved for an X3 workload allocation, which will be delivered to the Academic Staff member via the Executive Dean, or appropriate delegate (i.e. ADR or NHoS).

Academic Staff members will be advised of their research workload allocation, the number of years of approval and actions that may improve the staff member's RQR in future submissions by the Executive Dean. Staff are encouraged to discuss the outcome with their supervisor, NHOS and/or ADR where more detailed feedback would be helpful for future submissions.

The approved X3 research workload allocations will be forwarded to HR where the X3 allocations will be entered into the AWPS for the following calendar year

## Evidence of Research Quality

The RPRP process utilises an Academic Staff member's previous research outcomes and their proposed research which both undergo an assessment of quality based upon the discipline in which the Academic Staff members publishes and whether the discipline is a citation or peer review discipline. Both the quality of the output and the quality of outlet are factors when assessing overall quality. For further guidance on how the quality of a research output is assessed, please refer to the table at Appendix 1.

A list indicating citation or peer review disciplines is at Appendix 3. Further, where a peer review discipline is identified a list of journal rankings within that discipline or Field of Research (FoR) code is provided.

Staff should have an awareness of the average performance outcomes for grants by Academic level in FoRs across the sector. These are summarised at Appendix 4. These are derived from [2015 ERA data](#) and summarised by the University in this table.

The table demonstrates the differences across FoRs in the averages of grant performance. The grant performance is the average of all academics in a FoR across the sector and does not differentiate by academic level or academic career pathway. The table needs to be understood as a guide, that there is relativity across FoRs and the normal expectation is that Research Focussed or Research Only staff would be expected to perform higher in grant performance than Teaching and Research staff and that staff at levels C, D and E should perform higher in grant performance than staff at levels A and B.

### Citation disciplines

For Academic Staff within the citation disciplines, the key research quality measure will be the staff member's citation record. The Australian Research Council (ARC) uses citation rates as one measure of the research quality of publications. It does not use journal rankings, although there is clear benefit in publishing in high quality journals because they tend to attract high citation rates. A paper in *The Lancet*, for example, is very likely to have very high citation rates.

This is the same quality measure utilised by ERA in their assessment of the research quality across all the higher Education institutions in Australia. The citation database used by the ARC and in the ERA assessment has been the Scopus database and Scopus benchmarks will be used this year.

### **Building a quality case in the citation disciplines**

Scopus is the database that Academic Staff should utilise to check their citation rates when preparing their overall research quality case. Scopus can be accessed via the ACU website - Library – Databases or [www.scopus.com](http://www.scopus.com). Academic Staff can locate their own data by undertaking an author search.

It is possible for a researcher to track on the Scopus database the progress of their citation rates. The database is regularly updated. Academic Staff members can take a 'snapshot' of their citation performance by looking at the number of citations per paper for each of the years during the RPRP five (5) year review period.

In presenting a case for the quality of their research an Academic Staff member can draw attention to papers that are especially well cited as evidence. By examining their individual record on Scopus an Academic Staff member can see which of their publications are performing strongly in citations and which are not. This information can be used in their RPRP and in discussion with an academic supervisor to plan a publication strategy. It is important to note, that all publications classified at A<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>1</sub>, C<sub>1</sub>, E<sub>1</sub> and J<sub>1</sub> are taken into account in the assessment of citation performance so a stronger score can be achieved not necessarily by publishing more but by concentrating on quality publications. Academic Staff should consider where relevant, attaching a Scopus report (of their publications) to the RPRP application. A staff member should identify those publications listed in Scopus that are not A<sub>1</sub>, B<sub>1</sub> or C<sub>1</sub>.

An Academic Staff member should reference the quality of the outlet that they are utilising when providing evidence of research performance. For example, an academic staff member may have a lower citation profile but have a consistent history of publishing in higher quality outlets e.g. Journals with a rating of 5, A\*, or similar rank.

### **Peer Review disciplines**

For Academic Staff who publish within the peer review disciplines, quality journal lists have been developed by the relevant Faculties in conjunction with the DVC Research. These lists provide a guide for staff within the relevant discipline on the quality of a journal that they have either published in or are planning to publish in. Please note, guidance on the quality of book publishers should be sought from the ADR.

The lists will also be utilised by the FRWRP during the assessment of an Academic Staff member's RPRP. The use of a common list/s will ensure a consistent understanding of the ranking of a particular journal – resulting in a consistent application of quality assessment that can be utilised by all Academic Staff and reviewers within a relevant discipline.

The lists will be updated as required (journal rankings are dynamic and do change from time to time) and any updates will be notified/communicated to Academic Staff.

The current lists for relevant disciplines can be identified and accessed at Appendix 3.

### **Building a quality case in the peer review disciplines**

Academic Staff can review the journal lists for their discipline at Appendix 3. Academic Staff should be aware of the list/s that is relevant for their discipline/outputs.

When referring to a particular outcome (in a quality case) or upcoming outcome (in a plan), it is important to list the relevant ranking of the journal. If there are multiple lists within the relevant discipline, then list the ranking of the chosen journal in each list, then make reference to this – as that will be how the FRWRP and DVC Research will also consider the submission.

In addition, there may be a particular reason for an Academic Staff member to target a potentially alternate quality journal or a journal not on the list/s for the relevant discipline. It is important that the Academic Staff member take the opportunity to explain the rationale within their submission.

In presenting a case for the quality of their research an Academic Staff member can draw attention to papers that have been published in higher ranking journals as evidence. By examining their individual publication records and the ratings/rankings of the journals/publishers utilised, an Academic Staff member can see which of their publications are in higher quality journals. This information can be used in their RPRP and in discussion with an academic supervisor to plan a publication strategy. It is important to note, that your publication history can influence your quality case and a stronger quality case can be achieved not necessarily by publishing more but by concentrating on quality publications.

### **Important considerations for both citation and peer reviewed disciplines**

In the ERA only those publications classified as A1, B1, C1, E1, and J1 are assessed (further information regarding research classification types is available [here](#) – under Higher Education Research Data Collection HERDC). There may be publications in the Scopus database that are not, for example, C1. These should be excluded from the RPRP. There have been examples where C2 outcomes have in the past been incorrectly classified as C1. The consequences can be significant since C2 publications are of a kind that means they are generally published in lower ranking journals and generally have lower citation rates. Thus, they lower a researcher's citation performance (or journal quality profile) if they are included in the return. Since the ACU workload model does not directly reward volume of output there is no advantage in including C2 publications as C1.

The University has a policy to deal with these incorrect classifications and it is overseen by the Office of the DVC Research (ODVCR). In accordance with the [Procedures for the classification of research outputs](#), the Academic Staff member, in consultation with their nominated supervisor, should carefully check the classifications of their publications. It is important that ACU maintains the integrity of its HERDC return and ERA reporting by ensuring that papers are correctly classified.

For further information on research quality expectations and evidence by academic career pathway and academic level, please refer to the [Academic Performance Matrices and Evidence Framework](#).

## Faculty Research Workload Review Panel

### FRWRP Membership

Each FRWRP will consist of the following members:

- Executive Dean (Chair);
- Associate Dean, Research (ADR);
- Research Institute Director (RID) – one (1) from the relevant Faculty. (Please note that whilst every effort will be made to ensure each FRWRP has a RID, the FRWRP meetings can still proceed if a RID is not available);
- For the Faculty of Education and Arts, the Faculty of Law and Business and the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, both National Heads of School, or a delegated representative of the NHoS. For the Faculty of Health Sciences, two (2) NHoSs (or a delegated representative), of which one (1) must be relevant to the disciplines being considered;
- Two (2) senior academic staff members from the *ACU Panel of Research Excellence* – one from the reviewing Faculty and one from another Faculty (please note that whilst every effort will be made to ensure each FRWRP has both a Faculty and non-Faculty ACU Panel of Research Excellence member, the FRWRP meetings can still proceed if the non-Faculty member is not available); and
- An Administrative support person for the review panel to be provided from within the Faculty.

At the discretion of the Executive Dean a HR observer/advisor can participate in or provide clarity/guidance to the FRWRP.

### ACU Panel of Research Excellence

The ACU Panel of Research Excellence is a panel of senior Academic Staff who have a demonstrated record or experience in reviewing national competitive grant applications/submissions. Each Executive Dean in conjunction with the DVC Research, will identify and nominate relevant senior Academic Staff members at academic Level D or above to serve on the ACU Panel of Research Excellence.

### FRWRP Consideration and Research Workload Recommendation

Each FRWRP will normally meet annually in July or August to review/consider the submitted RPRPs.

The FRWRP will consider:

- The quality of previous outcomes and planned outcomes utilising citation data for citation disciplines, or the journal quality lists for peer review disciplines – utilising the Orion/ERA report; and
- The Academic Staff member's grant income performance against other academics both within and external to ACU utilising the [ERA 2015](#) discipline average (at Appendix 4) - utilising the Orion/ERA report.

The FRWRP makes an assessment of the overall quality research profile and makes a recommendation to the DVC Research. When assessing individual grant performance consideration is given to a number of factors including academic level, academic career pathway and stage of career. For example, an Academic Staff member at Level C in a Teaching and Research pathway would have a lower grant income expectation than a Research Only academic at Level E.

The normal expectation for grant performance would be:

- An Academic Staff member at Level D and E, would have an average grant income record well above the ERA benchmarked grant data<sup>10</sup>;
- An Academic Staff member at Level C would have a record of some grant income;
- An Academic Staff member at Level A or B would not be expected to have a record of grant income,
- The FRWRP will be looking for evidence of a demonstrated capability to submit competitive, if not always successful, research grant applications. This would include Information about unsuccessful grant applications and their ranking, for example, the top 10%, 25% or 50% etc.

In its assessment the FRWRP will have considered the Academic Staff member's overall performance in publications and grants relative to the staff member's academic level, academic career pathway and previous research workload and opportunity. Further it will consider stage of career against a timeline of years since graduation from highest educational qualification and consider any research opportunities and experience in the context of employment situations including those outside academia and the research component of employment conditions. Periods of unemployment, or any career interruptions for child birth, carers' responsibilities, misadventure, or debilitating illness will be taken into account. Access to research mentoring and other research support facilities and any other relevant aspects of career experience or opportunities for research will complete the considerations.

The FRWRP may recommend, and the DVC Research may determine, that the staff member's performance in publishing in quality journal and publishers ranked in the Faculty Quality Journal lists at Appendix 4 in a sustained way constitutes a quality research profile that does not need evidence of grant performance.

## **New Staff Process and staff away during submission period**

For staff commencing at ACU following the annual research workload allocation process (i.e. after the annual call for RPRP submissions) but before the end of the calendar year, the New Starter process will apply.

Following commencement at ACU, a new Academic Staff member will be asked to submit their non-affiliated research outputs for the past 5 years. Non-affiliated research publications are publications that have been authored whilst employed at a previous institution. These publications can be utilised for reporting purposes for ERA and research workload allocation.

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<sup>10</sup> For ERA benchmarked data, please refer to Appendix 4

Please note, it is important that this process be undertaken as soon as possible after commencement as the RPRP process does utilise this data as the basis of the research review. For further information on the use of this data, please refer to relevant sections above.

The New Starter process is summarised as follows:

- the new staff member would be required to submit an initial (Standard/Full) RPRP utilising the current template, incorporating the review and rolling three (3) year plan and attaching the following:
  - Curriculum Vitae;
  - Scopus data relating to publications and citations (where relevant) for the 5 years preceding their ACU appointment; and
  - External Grants obtained prior to ACU appointment and evidence of grant approvals.
- the relevant ADR and NHoS would meet to review the submitted RPRP;
- the ADR (with input from NHoS and Executive Dean where relevant) would propose an initial research workload (for prospective semester/s) and submit the recommendation to the DVC Research for approval;
- Research workload allocation confirmed or adjusted by DVC Research. Should a recommendation be adjusted, the DVC Research will provide feedback regarding the decision to the ADR – which will be delivered to the Academic Staff member via the Executive Dean, or appropriate delegate (i.e. ADR or NHoS);
- Approved research workload allocations forwarded to HR where approved research workload allocations will be entered into the AWPS.

The Academic Staff member then commences the standard annual process during the next submission period.

Academic Staff who are on extended leave during the RPRP submission period may also be eligible to be considered via the New Starter process described above with approval from the relevant Executive Dean.

For Academic Staff seeking a research workload who commence after the beginning of a calendar year, the relevant NHoS and ADR will consult and make a recommendation to the DVC Research who will determine an X<sub>3</sub> workload for that calendar year. The DVC Research will confirm the X<sub>3</sub> workload allocation to the ADR or NHoS for that calendar year.

The new Academic Staff member would then submit a RPRP through the Standard/full process during the normal annual call later that year for an X<sub>3</sub> research workload in the following year.

## Dispute Resolution

If a staff member disputes the application of the Academic Workload [Policy](#) (i.e. they disagree with a relevant and specific research workload allocation) they may be eligible to lodge a Workplace Complaint in accordance with the University's [Staff Complaints Management](#)

[Policy and Procedure](#). These matters are not subject to the application of clause 5.2.7 of the ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement 2017 – 2021.

Under the University's [Staff Complaints Management Policy and Procedure](#) a Workplace Complaint means "a complaint from a staff member concerning treatment in a particular workplace that is inequitable or procedurally unfair; or a complaint that arises from perceived personal concerns relating to one or more work-related interpersonal relationships."

A disputed research workload allocation will be resolved and, if relevant, investigated in accordance with the University's Staff Complaints Management Policy and Procedure and will not be subject to review of the Workload Advisory Committee or any other University process or procedure.

## Review

These guidelines and appendices will be reviewed annually to support each annual process.

## Further Assistance

Any staff member who requires assistance in understanding these guidelines should first consult their nominated supervisor who is responsible for the implementation and operation of these arrangements in their work area. Should further advice be required staff should contact the Human Resources, [HR@acu.edu.au](mailto:HR@acu.edu.au) or extension 4222.

Any staff member who wishes to make any comments about these guidelines may forward their suggestions to the Human Resources.

## Associated Policies/Documents

- [ACU Staff Enterprise Agreement – 2017 - 2021](#)
- [Academic Workload Policy](#)
- [Academic Performance Matrices and Evidence Framework](#)
- [Staff Complaints Management Policy and Procedure](#)

## Appendix 1

### Research Quality Rating Guidelines

Quality Rating Guidelines – Publications and Outlets			
Quality of Research Output		Quality of Research Outlet	
5	An output of exceptional quality. There is evidence of the exceptional quality through recognition conferred by peers of the highest disciplinary standing. The work makes an exceptional contribution to new knowledge or new understandings at well-above world standard, which, in non-traditional research areas, may be evidenced by professional recognition and/or take-up.	5	An exceptional academic or commercial press or journal recognised as amongst the very best in the world. An outlet of exceptional or pre-eminent international standing demonstrating research that is at the leading edge and shaping the discipline.
4	An output of major quality. There is evidence of the major quality through recognition conferred by peers of very high standing. The work makes a major contribution to new knowledge or new understandings at above world standard, which, in non-traditional research areas, may be evidenced by professional recognition and/or take-up.	4	A major academic or commercial press or journal recognised as a leading publisher or journal in the discipline - perhaps with a specialised focus on the publication of work in a particular discipline or set of disciplines. An outlet of major cultural significance that relies on formal quality assurance or review, processes conferred by representatives of international organisations and institutions.
3	An output of high quality. There is evidence of the high quality through recognition by peers of very high standing. The work makes a high-quality contribution to new knowledge or new understandings at world standard, which, in non-traditional research areas, may be evidenced by professional recognition and/or take-up.	3	A strong academic or commercial press recognised nationally, and usually internationally, as publishing work of a high standard. An outlet of high quality that regularly delivers output at world standard.
1-2	Research that is below the standard described in 3 above.	1-2	Below the standard described in 3 above.

Quality Rating Guidelines – Researchers	
Quality Rating	Description
5	An exceptional researcher rated at well above world standard within their discipline/s.
4	A research rated at above world standard within their discipline/s.
3	A research rated at world standard within their discipline/s.
1-2	A researcher rated at below world standard in their discipline/s at the present time.

## Appendix 2

### Research Quality Rating and associated X3 research workload allocation ranges

Quality Rating	Allocation Range (Hours)	%FTE Annual Workload Range (% of 1595)	Equivalent Weeks of Work Range
1	0	0%	0
	1 to 35	0 to 2.3%	0 to 1
	36 to 70	2.3% to 4.4%	1 to 2
	71 to 105	4.4% to 6.6%	2 to 3
2	106 to 140	6.6% to 8.8%	3 to 4
	141 to 180	8.8% to 11.3%	4 to 5.2
3	200 to 250	12.5% to 15.7%	5.7 to 7.1
	251 to 300	15.7% to 18.8%	7.1 to 8.6
	301 to 350	18.8% to 21.9%	8.6 to 10
	351 to 400	21.9% to 25.1%	10 to 11.4
	401 to 450	25.1% to 28.2%	11.4 to 12.9
	451 to 500	28.2% to 31.3%	12.9 to 14.3
	501 to 550	31.3% to 34.5%	14.3 to 15.7
	551 to 600	34.5% to 37.6%	15.7 to 17.1
4	601 to 640	37.6% to 40.1%	17.1 to 18.3
	680 to 720	42.6% to 45.1%	19.4 to 20.6
	721 to 760	45.1% to 47.6%	20.6 to 21.7
5	761 to 800	47.6% to 50.1%	21.7 to 22.9
	801 to 880	50.1% to 55.1%	22.9 to 25.1
	881 to 960	55.1% to 60.2%	25.1 to 27.4
	961 to 1040	60.2% to 65.2%	27.4 to 29.7
	1041 to 1120	65.2% to 70.2%	29.7 to 32
	1121 to 1200	70.2% to 75.2%	32 to 34.3
	1201 to 1280	75.2% to 80.2%	34.3 to 36.6
	1281 to 1360	80.2% to 85.3%	36.6 to 38.9
1361 to 1435	85.3% to 90%	38.9 to 41	

## Appendix 3

### Research Quality Review Measures by Discipline/FoR Code

FOR Code	FOR Title	FOR Quality Measure (Journals)	FOR Quality Measure (Books)	Comments/Link
0406	Physical Geography and Environmental Geoscience	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
05	Environmental Sciences	Citation Data in Scopus		
08	Information and Computing Sciences	<a href="#">Australian Business Deans Council List</a>		
1103	Clinical Sciences	Citation Data in Scopus		
1106	Human Movement and Sports Science	Citation Data in Scopus		
1110	Nursing	Citation Data in Scopus		
1117	Public Health and Health Services	Citation Data in Scopus a		
13	Education	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1301	Education Systems	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1302	Curriculum and Pedagogy	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1303	Specialist Studies in Education	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1399	Other Education	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1401	Economic Theory	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1402	Applied Economics	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1403	Econometrics	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1501	Accounting, Auditing and Accountability	<a href="#">Australian Business Deans Council List</a>		
1502	Banking, Finance and Investment	<a href="#">Australian Business Deans Council List</a>		
1503	Business and Management	<a href="#">Australian Business Deans Council List</a>		

FOR Code	FOR Title	FOR Quality Measure (Journals)	FOR Quality Measure (Books)	Comments/Link
1505	Marketing	<a href="#">Australian Business Deans Council List</a>		
1605	Policy and Administration	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1606	Political Science	<a href="#">Australian Political Studies Association (APSA) List</a>		
1607	Social Work	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1608	Sociology	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1699	Other Studies in Human Society	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1701	Psychology	Citation Data in Scopus		
1702	Cognitive Science	Citation Data in Scopus		
18	Law and Legal Studies	<a href="#">Deakin Law School</a>		
1801	Law	<a href="#">Deakin Law School</a>		
1901	Arts Theory and Criticism	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1904	Performing Arts and Creative Writing	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
1905	Visual Arts and Crafts	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
2001	Communication and Media Studies	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
2002	Cultural Studies	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
2005	Literary Studies	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
2103	Historical Studies	Faculty Ranking List		<a href="#">Attachment</a>
2201	Applied Ethics	Faculty Ranking List	Faculty Ranking List	See 2203 <a href="#">Attachment</a>
2202	History and Philosophy of Specific Fields	Faculty Ranking List	Faculty Ranking List	See 2203 <a href="#">Attachment</a>
2203	Philosophy	Faculty Ranking List	Faculty Ranking List	<a href="#">Attachment</a>

<b>FOR Code</b>	<b>FOR Title</b>	<b>FOR Quality Measure (Journals)</b>	<b>FOR Quality Measure (Books)</b>	<b>Comments/Link</b>
2204	Religion and Religious Studies	Faculty Ranking List		TBC

## Appendix 4

ERA 2015 discipline specific benchmarks for grants for use in RPRP submissions in 2018 for 2019 workload recommendations<sup>11</sup>.

Annual Grants Benchmarks by FoR			
FoR Code	FoR Name	Annual Grant Income	
		Current ERA 2015 Grant Income	Former ERA 2012 Grant Income
05	Environmental Sciences	\$168,000	\$131,000
08	Information and Computing Sciences	\$47,000	\$43,000
1103	Clinical Sciences	\$123,000	\$136,000
1106	Human Movement and Sports Science	\$37,000	\$36,000
1110	Nursing	\$44,000	\$33,000
1117	Public Health and Health Services	\$161,000	\$155,000
1301	Education Systems	\$28,000	\$22,000
1302	Curriculum and Pedagogy	\$24,000	\$15,000
1303	Specialist Studies in Education	\$32,000	\$34,000
14	Economics	\$53,000	\$53,000
15	Commerce, Management, Tourism and Services	\$16,000	\$14,000
1501	Accounting, Auditing and Accountability	\$8,000	\$7,000
1502	Banking, Finance and Investment	\$23,000	\$14,000
1503	Business and Management	\$23,000	\$20,000
1505	Marketing	\$17,000	\$18,000
16	Studies in Human Society	\$54,000	\$44,000
1605	Policy and Administration	\$88,000	\$79,000
1606	Political Science	\$53,000	\$34,000
1607	Social Work	\$43,000	\$35,000
1608	Sociology	\$63,000	\$52,000

<sup>11</sup> Average annualised research income per researcher (Research income/FTEs) across HERDC categories 1-4 as per the publicly available [ERA 2015](#) data for the [ERA 2015 reference period](#) 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013.

1701	Psychology	\$73,000	\$56,000
1702	Cognitive Science	\$27,000	\$42,000
18	Law and Legal Studies	\$19,000	\$16,000
1801	Law	\$20,000	\$17,000
1904	Performing Arts and Creative Writing	\$10,000	\$6,000
1905	Visual Arts and Crafts	\$6,000	\$6,000
20	Language, Communication and Culture	\$20,000	\$21,000
2005	Literary Studies	\$21,000	\$14,000
21	History and Archaeology	\$50,000	\$48,000
2103	Historical Studies	\$41,000	\$43,000
22	Philosophy and Religious Studies	\$26,000	\$21,000
2201	Applied Ethics	\$25,000	\$19,000
2202	History and Philosophy of Specific Fields	\$37,000	\$25,000
2203	Philosophy	\$28,000	\$27,000
2204	Religion and Religious Studies	\$24,000	\$21,000