



Australian Government

Australian Research Council

Excellence in Research for Australia



ERA 2010 and ERA 2012
ANZAM Workshop
29 June 2011

Objectives of ERA

- Establish an *evaluation framework*;
- Provide a *national stock take* of discipline-level research;
- Identify *excellence* across the full spectrum of research performance;
- Identify *emerging research areas* and *opportunities for further development*;
- Allow for *comparison* of Australia's research *nationally* and *internationally* for all discipline areas.

ERA Development 2008-2010

- Several major rounds of consultation
- Indicator Development Group (specialist sub-groups)
- Ranked journals and conferences consultation
- Discipline specific indicators
- Full trial in 2009 of PCE and HCA
 - test of systems, processes
 - feedback from sector, RECs, peer reviewers
- Esteem indicators
- First full ERA evaluation in 2010

The ERA Unit of Evaluation

- The **baseline** - the Discipline in an institution = Four-digit Field of Research Code (ANZSRC) eg.,
2101 Archaeology
- The **higher perspective** – the division in an institution = Two-digit Field of Research Code (ANZSRC) eg.,
21 History and Archaeology
- The ERA Unit is not about the department nor the individual researcher



Why a matrix approach to indicators?

- Not all indicators are suitable for all disciplines
- Pick and choose what is right for each discipline
- The indicator suite must ensure comparable quality across a range of indicator types
- Expert review and specialist disciplinary knowledge are essential – not a mechanical process

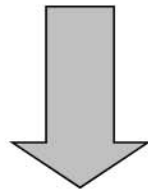
Stages of evaluation

- Every UoE evaluated by at least three REC members (plus peer reviewers)
- Independent evaluation in the first instance followed by exchange of views
- All evaluations were advice to the full Committee
- All UoEs discussed at the final evaluation meeting
- All final ratings decisions of the Committee as a whole

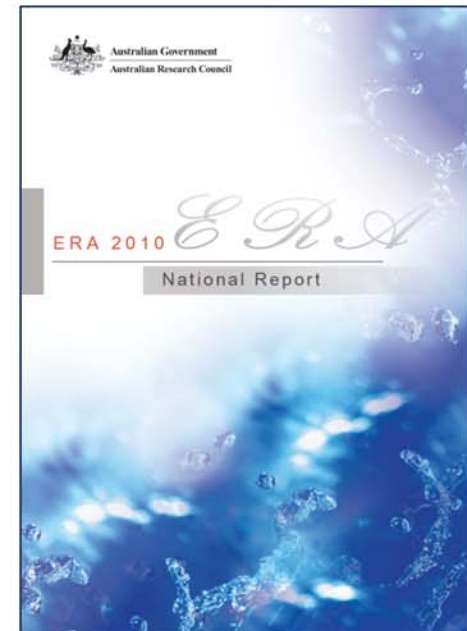
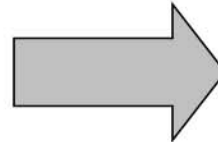
ERA Process Overview

- Volume and Activity
- Journal Quality
- Citation analysis or peer review
- Research Income
- Applied Measures
- Esteem

**Please note –
no weightings**



**Research Evaluation
Committee**



Scale of ERA 2010

- All 41 eligible institutions submitted data
- Over 330,000 unique research outputs and 55,000 researchers represented
- 2,435 units of evaluation assessed at the two- and four-digit level
- 149 Research Evaluation Committee (REC) members and 500+ Peer Reviewers contributed evaluations
- All aggregated data presented in the *ERA 2010 National Report*.

ERA 2010 myths

- ✘ Averages and Rankings
- ✘ Sciences v. Social Sciences & Humanities
- ☑ ERA does *not* evaluate individuals
- ☑ ERA does *not* evaluate individual outputs
- ☑ Ranked Journals do *not* drive ERA ratings
- ☑ ERA evaluations utilised metrics and peer review moderated by expert judgement

Consultations for ERA 2012

- ERA Public Consultation (11 March to 7 April 2011)
 - open consultation on issues including reporting, indicators, eligibility, discipline matrix
- Outreach sessions with institutions and peak bodies
- Detailed feedback from ERA 2010 REC members and peer reviewers
- Feedback from institutions on submission processes

Changes to journals and conferences

- Refined journal and conference indicator for ERA 2012
- Ranks will not be used, instead outputs profiled by most frequent journals and conferences in the UoE, with drilldowns available as in 2010
- ARC will still produce journal and conference lists – will not include rankings but will include FoR codes for citation analysis purposes
- Strong feedback that ranked lists were having negative consequences in the sector
- ARC analysis suggested a refined indicator would produce improved results while removing negative consequences

Interdisciplinary research

- Journal articles with $\geq 66\%$ content in a discipline can be apportioned to that discipline
- Approach was successfully trialled in 2010 for Mathematics
- Allows stronger recognition of interdisciplinary and applied research
- Aligns journals with all other types of outputs which already used this approach in 2010

Raising the threshold

- Low volume threshold for peer review disciplines raised to 50 apportioned weighted outputs (maintaining the 5:1 weighting for books)
- Threshold remains the same for citation analysis disciplines
- Aligns all disciplines at 50 outputs
- Recognises strong feedback from sector and from 2010 evaluators
- ERA units need sufficient volume

Eligibility of fractional staff

- Fractional staff: minimum 40% appointment at ERA census date
- Those below 40% can still submit with by-line or similar requirement (similar to existing approach for casuals)
- Addresses concern about ERA-driven “poaching”
- Recognises that in many cases those below 40% are legitimately employed – their outputs can still be submitted

Capturing applied research

- Patents, plant breeder's rights and registered designs assigned to individuals now eligible for submission
- Strong feedback that some applied work was not being captured
- Not all institutions register these measures to the institution

ERA 2012 – still to do

- Recruitment of Research Evaluation Committees
- Expansion of peer reviewer pool (including internationals)
- Further enhancement of the peer review indicator (nomination of outputs, reporting by reviewers)
- Selection of citation data provider
- Draft Submission Guidelines to be issued to the sector in July for comment

Further information

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