

Research Active Definition Policy

Section 1 - Background

(1) The [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) require that 'research is conducted, or overseen, by staff with qualifications, research experience and skills relevant to the type of research undertaken and their role' (Section 4.1.2) and that higher degree research 'students are admitted to research training only where the training can be provided in a supervisory and study environment of research activity...' (Section 4.2.2).

(2) The Higher Education Provider Category Standards (PCS) are the legislative instrument of the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#). The PCS define the various categories of higher education providers and outline the associated requirements for registration by the [Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency \(TEQSA\)](#).

Section 2 - Purpose

(3) This Policy defines 'research-active' status for the purposes of seeking accreditation as a Higher Degree Research (HDR) Supervisor, as adopted by the Australian Catholic University (ACU). This definition is developed in accordance with the requirements of the [Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#) and the PCS.

(4) The Policy outlines the threshold of research quality needed to supervise Higher Degree Research (HDR) candidates and uses existing ACU research quality review mechanisms to determine Research Active status.

(5) The Policy highlights ACU's commitment to research excellence by supporting ACU's research intensification strategy and is to be considered in conjunction with the University's [Academic Workload Policy](#).

Section 3 - Scope

(6) This Policy applies to all ACU staff seeking Research Active status for the purposes of accreditation as a HDR Supervisor.

Section 4 - Definition of Research

(7) Research is defined as 'creative and systematic work undertaken in order to increase the stock of knowledge – including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to devise new applications of available knowledge'^[1]. This includes contribution to new knowledge through original investigation^[2] and synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative.

^[1] OECD (2015), Frascati Manual 2015: [Guidelines for Collecting and Reporting Data on Research and Experimental Development](#), The Measurement of Scientific, Technological and Innovation Activities, OECD Publishing, Paris, pp 44-45.

Section 5 - Attaining Research Active Status

(8) Staff members who are deemed to be at Research Quality Rating (RQR) 3 (at world standard) (refer Research Performance Review and Plan Guidelines (RPRP)) or above, as a result of the annual RPRP assessment will attain Research Active status.

(9) Where a staff member has not undertaken an annual RPRP the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) will assess the staff member's research activities and outputs relative to opportunity in order to consider eligibility for Research Active status.

(10) In cases of exceptional circumstance, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) may consider a staff member for Research Active status.

(11) Staff who attain Research Active status and who wish to supervise HDR candidates at ACU must submit a request for accreditation as an HDR Supervisor in accordance with the [Accreditation of Higher Degree Research Supervisors Policy](#).

Section 6 - Retaining Research Active Status

(12) A staff member's Research Active status will be updated each year following completion of the RPRP process.

(13) If a staff member is deemed through the annual RPRP process to be at RQR 3 (at world standard) or above, they will retain their Research Active status.

(14) If a staff member is deemed through the annual RPRP process to be below RQR 3 (at world standard), their research activities and outputs will be referred to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) for review and decision (refer to clause (9) of this Policy).

(15) If a staff member does not retain Research Active status following a review under clause (14) of this Policy, the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) will inform the Associate Dean, Research. The Associate Dean, Research will review the composition of supervisory panels on which the staff member is active in order to ensure the provision of effective supervision and, as appropriate, confirm that no changes are required or amend the panel (refer Section 7 of the [Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy](#)).

(16) Staff who do not retain Research Active status following a review under clause (14) of this Policy cannot be added to any further HDR candidate supervisory panels.

Section 7 - Revisions made to this Policy

(17) Unless otherwise indicated, this Policy will still apply beyond the review date.

Section 8 - Associated Information

(18) For related legislation, policies, procedures and guidelines and any supporting resources, please refer to the Associated Information tab.

Status and Details

Status	Historic
Effective Date	20th December 2023
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Approval Authority	
Approval Date	20th December 2023
Expiry Date	5th June 2024
Responsible Executive	Abid Khan Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
Responsible Manager	Michelle Lopez Director, Graduate Research School
Enquiries Contact	Lisa Lavey Research Executive Advisor <hr/> Research and Enterprise