

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 various purposes, including 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.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) This Policy applies to all ACU staff seeking Research Active status.

Section 4 - Definition of Research

(5) Research is defined as ‘creative and systematic work undertaken to increase the stock of knowledge – including knowledge of humankind, culture and society – and to devise new applications of available knowledge’^[1]. This includes contributions 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.

[2] [TEQSA Guidance note: Research and research training](#).

Section 5 - Attaining Research Active Status

(6) To be deemed Research Active, academics must:

- a. have produced at least 5 high-quality publication points in the last 5 years; and
- b. be performing at Achievement Standard 1. of [Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide](#) for their discipline and academic level according to the Achievement Standards for Academic Staff (see [Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide](#)) in one additional area of: research income, research engagement and impact, or research training noted in [Schedule 3: Academic Promotions Criteria and Evidence Guide](#).

(7) Achievement relative to opportunity will be considered in evaluating research active status according to the [Achievement Relative to Opportunity \(ARtO\) Guide](#).

(8) 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 Higher Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy

Section 6 - Retaining Research Active Status

(9) Research Active status will be confirmed by the Associate Dean, Research when forming supervision panels or processing changes to supervision panels.

(10) A staff member will be confirmed as research active for a period of three (3) years automatically if they meet the minimal requirements when evaluated as part of the Research Workload Allocation (RWA) process.

(11) Research Active status should be considered in recruitment, selection, and performance review processes for Teaching and Research, Research-Focused, and Research only academic positions and pathways.

(12) A staff member may be confirmed as research active for a three (3) year period outside of the RWA process by application to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research).

(13) If a staff member no longer meets the minimum thresholds (refer to clause 6) for Research Active status, the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise) will inform the Faculty Associate Dean, Research. The Faculty Associate Dean, Research will review the composition of supervisory panels on which the staff member is active to ensure the provision of effective supervision and, as appropriate, confirm that no changes are required or amend the panel (refer to Section 8 of the [Higher Degree Research Supervision Policy](#)).

(14) Staff who do not retain Research Active status cannot be principal supervisor for any new HDR candidates.

Section 7 - Revisions made to this Policy

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

Section 8 - Associated Information

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

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	6th June 2024
Review Date	6th June 2029
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	22nd May 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Executive	Abid Khan Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Enterprise)
Responsible Manager	Phil Parker Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)
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