



Newsletter No.3 of May 2007

## Introduction

Only a short *Newsletter* this time, but a very important one as it provides advice on the development of quality metrics for the RQF and advice on the first meeting of Assessment Panel Chairs.

I should also mention that the *Higher Education Legislation Amendment (2007 Measures No. 1) Bill 2007* passed both Houses of Parliament on 9 May 2007 and is currently awaiting Royal Assent. This legislation, among other things, provides funding for the implementation of the RQF.

Our FAQs have been placed on the website at [www.dest.gov.au/research/rqf](http://www.dest.gov.au/research/rqf). The FAQs will update from time to time.

Cheers

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Branch Manager of RQF Taskforce

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## Development of Quality Metrics for the RQF

DEST will shortly commence development of quality metrics for the RQF. Following on from the recommendations of the Metrics Working Group of the Development Advisory Group (DAG), metrics will consist of three discipline-specific measures:

1. Ranked research outlets (e.g. journals, books, performance venues and conferences),
2. Citation measures, and
3. Research Income.

The Research Evaluation and Policy Project (REPP) at the Research School of Social Sciences, Australian National University has been engaged as a consultant to coordinate the development of quality metrics. DEST will shortly be asking the sector to undertake a range of the development work. DEST is considering how to provide financial assistance for those peak bodies involved.

1. Development will begin with a limited “research outlets ranking exercise”. The exercise will have the following stages:

- In May, DEST will request a limited number of universities to provide publications data over the last five years to be used to develop a draft ranking of research outlets.
- Once this data has been collated according to discipline, in consultation with Panel Chairs and the REPP, DEST will engage a number of peak bodies to coordinate and undertake the rankings exercise for each discipline.

These rankings will be used to rate the body of work for research groups and will assist panels with the RQF assessment process.

2. DEST will commence working on discipline-specific citations measures once a data supplier has been selected from a competitive process.

3. Peak bodies will be asked to decide whether research income from Australian competitive grants and international peer reviewed grants are relevant to each discipline's quality metrics, as well as how they will be calculated.

### **First Meeting of Assessment Panel Chairs**

On 17 April 2007, the Minister announced the appointment of Assessment Panel Chairs. The first meeting of the Panel Chairs was held in Canberra on 8 May 2007. The Agenda for the meeting included:

- Progress Report on the RQF;
- Draft Timetable for the RQF Assessment Phase;
- Workload for Panel Chairs; and
- Panel Chairs' input into the RQF Panel-specific guidance material.

The RQF Specifications, which will include Panel-specific guidance material, will be released for sector consultation in July 2007.

The next meeting of Assessment Panel Chairs has been scheduled for 5-6 June 2007.