



Australian Government
Department of Education,
Science and Training

Newsletter

Research Quality Framework

Newsletter No.6 of September 2007

Introduction

I am pleased to advise that the Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP has approved the RQF Specifications.

The finalisation of these Specifications and the Minister's subsequent approval is a great achievement by all parties involved in this consultative process. Accordingly, I would like to express my sincere thanks to everyone for their thoughtful contributions and their tireless efforts. Well done.

In this *Newsletter*:

- Minister approves RQF Specifications;
- Membership of RQF Assessment Panels announced;
- Metrics update;
- Research income; and
- Research Quality Framework Reference Committee Meeting Outcomes.

Cheers

Leanne Harvey
Branch Manager of RQF Taskforce

Minister approves RQF Specifications

The Minister for Education Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP has released the final Specifications for the 2008 RQF assessment process.

The *RQF Submission Specifications* will assist Research Groups and institutions in preparing their submissions for the RQF assessment process. Panel-Specific Guidance is incorporated in these specifications.

The *RQF Technical Specifications* provide advice on submitting data electronically and other guidance relating to the RQF Information Management System.

The final Specifications are now available from the DEST website:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/policies_issues_reviews/key_issues/research_quality_framework/default.htm#RQF_Specifications .

Membership of RQF Assessment Panels announced

The Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP, has announced the membership of the 13 Assessment Panels for the Research Quality Framework (RQF).

Members of Assessment Panels will assess the evidence portfolios of Research Groups submitted by higher education providers as part of the RQF assessment process in 2008, and will award a rating for Quality and Impact.

The 13 Assessment Panels are based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Research Fields, Courses and Disciplines (RFCDD) codes and are structured to provide a balance between research discipline coverage and likely workload for assessors.

Each Panel will have 12 members and will include a Chair, assessors of international standing and end users. The Chair of each panel was announced in April 2007.

There are 156 Panel members. A full list of Panel members is available on the DEST website:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/policies_issues_reviews/key_issues/research_quality_framework/rqf_assessment_2008.htm#2008_Assessment_Panel_Members

Metrics update

Work to develop and agree on discipline specific outlet rankings is progressing, with a number of disciplines releasing draft rankings lists for consultation.

The majority of the outlet ranking is occurring through the National Academies Forum with draft outlet ranking lists currently being developed. These lists will be released for consultation in October 2007. A list of relevant bodies/groups facilitating the consultation is now available on the DEST website:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/policies_issues_reviews/key_issues/research_quality_framework/documents_and_forms.htm#Ranked_Outlet_Development

DEST will release the final outlet ranking lists to be used for the 2008 RQF with the *Guidance Material for Assessment Panels and Advisors*.

DEST is in the process of contracting the RQF citation database supplier and will announce this to the sector shortly.

Research Income

As outlined in the *RQF Submission Specifications*, research income will not be used as a metric for the first round of the RQF. Research income that has supported a Research Group can be added to the descriptive component of the context statement.

For more information on metrics for the RQF please see the *RQF Submission Specifications* and the Bibliometrics FAQ on the DEST website: <http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/8F12ADCB-C221-421E-A128-2C344CD58BDF/18516/FAQBibliometrics.pdf>

Research Quality Framework Reference Committee Outcomes

The RQF Reference Committee held a Teleconference on 3 September 2007. The Committee discussed: finalisation of Assessment Panels membership; contract arrangements for the development of discipline-specific rankings of research outlets; and finalisation of the RQF Specifications.