



Australian Government
Department of Education,
Science and Training

Newsletter

Research Quality Framework

Newsletter No.7 of October 2007

Introduction

Welcome to the October RQF Newsletter. Following the announcement by the Minister of the final Specifications for the RQF last month, the RQF Taskforce continues its work towards the assessment process in 2008.

It has been a busy period since the release of the Specifications with the application period for exemptions from the *in situ* criterion closing. Thank you for ensuring these applications were received within the timeframe.

There is also wonderful news with regard to Copyright for the RQF. The Attorney-General has approved the use of an agreement under section 183(1) of the *Copyright Act 1968* authorising institutions participating in the Research Quality Framework (RQF) to make use of copyright material for the RQF process.

The RQF Taskforce will continue with its preparations for the 2008 assessment process throughout October. If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact the Taskforce at: rqf@dest.gov.au.

In this *Newsletter*:

- Copyright update;
- Citation Database Supplier announced;
- Metrics Update;
- Exemptions from the *in situ* criterion;
- Call for RQF Advisors;
- Training Days for RQF Assessment Panel Members;
- Other news - HEEF Consultation Paper.

Cheers

Leanne Harvey
Branch Manager of RQF Taskforce

Copyright

Appointment of institutions to do copyright acts for the services of the Commonwealth

The Attorney-General has approved the use of an agreement under section 183(1) of the *Copyright Act 1968* authorising institutions participating in the Research Quality Framework (RQF) to make use of copyright material for the RQF process. The use of this material will be deemed to have been done for the services of the Commonwealth.

This approach complements the existing agreements that DEST has obtained from those publishers specifically listed on the RQF website.

Institutions participating in the RQF will shortly receive a letter of agreement from DEST authorising them to do copyright acts for the purposes of the RQF, including reproduction and communication to the public that are necessary or convenient to comply with institutions' obligations under the RQF.

The authorisation will apply to the copyright in literary, dramatic, musical or artistic works, or a published edition of such a work, or in a sound recording, cinematograph film, television broadcast or sound broadcast.

Once signed, institutions will not be required to obtain specific approval to store, communicate, link to and/or copy Research Outputs in the institution's RQF repository for the purposes of the RQF as outlined in section 7.8.1 of the *RQF Submission Specifications*. This authorisation will not extend to any act comprised in the copyright committed for any purpose other than compliance with institutions' obligations under the RQF or the *RQF Submission Specifications*.

Institutions are reminded that where the institution or the researcher is the copyright owner, or where the copyright owner has given express permission for the Research Output to be stored in an 'open access' repository, the Research Output should be stored in an 'open access' repository or an 'open access' part of the RQF repository.

RQF Citation data supplier

DEST is pleased to announce Thomson Scientific as the data supplier for the RQF. Following completion of the outlet ranking, DEST will publish the citation benchmarks for each discipline where citations are appropriate (at the four digit RFCDC code level).

Metrics Update

Work continues on development of discipline specific research outlet rankings. A number of disciplines have released draft ranking lists for consultation while others are beginning the outlet ranking exercise.

As advised in the September *Newsletter* the majority of the outlet ranking is occurring through the four National Academies, however we also have a number of discipline specific groups developing rankings.

An updated list of relevant bodies/groups facilitating the consultation is available on the DEST website. Check for your discipline here:

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

Exemptions from the *in situ* criterion

Institutions were required to apply to DEST on behalf of a researcher for an exemption from the *in situ* criterion by COB 28 September 2007.

Institutions needed to apply to DEST on behalf of a researcher to meet the eligibility Criterion 4c (section 2.1 *RQF Submission Specifications*) where the researcher's contract commenced less than three months prior to the Staff Census Date.

The application needed to satisfy DEST that the staff movement was part of a long-term strategic decision or falls within the normal employment practice of the institution, rather than a short-term movement.

DEST will consider all applications seeking an exemption from the *in situ* Criterion. Decisions will be finalised and notified to institutions by Friday 26 October 2007.

Call for RQF Advisors

People who are interested in becoming an RQF Advisor are asked to complete an Expression of Interest form and return it to DEST. Advisors will comprise of experienced researchers with national and international standing, or end-users from industry, business or community organisations; and support the RQF Assessment Panels by assessing the RQF material by determining the research quality and/or impact ratings based on the submitted evidence from eligible higher education institutions.

Further information about RQF Advisors can be found on the DEST website at:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/policies_issues_reviews/key_issues/research_quality_framework/rqf_advisors.htm

Training Days for RQF Assessment Panel Members

DEST will be hosting training days for the RQF Assessment Panels from mid-October to mid-November 2007, to allow panel members to meet, and to provide members with an overview of the RQF and their forthcoming responsibilities and activities.

Other News:

Higher Education Endowment Fund (HEEF) Consultation Paper

A consultation paper has been released by the HEEF Advisory Board inviting public submissions. The consultation paper will assist in the development of the HEEF grants programme and the role of philanthropy, and will inform further consultations with the sector. The closing date for submissions is COB 7 December 2007. Further information can be found on the HEEF website at:

http://www.heef.dest.gov.au/consultation_process.htm