Torrens University Australia

Strategic Research Plan

2021-2025

TORRENS UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

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1. Message from the Vice Chancellor

Research that Matters

Higher Education is generally accepted as a key driver of development in societies. This perspective is founded on the key characteristics and capacity of the institution of Higher Education to generate new knowledge and knowledge instruments, together with its ability to become an inherent contributor to the competencies of its people and its systems.

In previous decades, where the transition from the industrial era to the knowledge and now also the technology explosion in the Fourth Industrial Era brought drastic changes within societies, Higher Education has been under continuous pressure to define its meaning and role in leading and supporting new knowledge and skills requirements.

Fundamental to responding to these expectations is the ability of Higher Education to provide the relevant information and knowledge required to enable the understanding of these changes and support innovation to optimise the benefit of the opportunities created in these contexts. This implies that the era of explaining situations only in publications and presentations is not sufficient anymore. The approach now required goes beyond the traditional in as much as Higher Education is expected to translate knowledge and information into relevant ideas and solutions, impacting real problem solving and enhancing the capacity of systems to improve its role and contribution to the improvement of the human condition.

It is against this background that Torrens University is committed to the idea of Research that Matters. It focusses its research on creating knowledge that addresses practical situations, problems and opportunities to bring change – aiming at innovation. To ensure that the institution optimises its role and impact its attention is now focussed on four key themes addressing matters relating to:

1. Societies in drastic change,
2. Preparing organisations and people for change and impact in society,
3. Developing health systems and solutions,
4. Security and sustainability in the process of change.

Considering the complexity and integrated nature of opportunities and challenges in the current era, identifying interdisciplinary and growing transdisciplinary solutions is imperative. Supporting the focus on the implementation of these methods, research centres support each of the themes and establish research teams to ensure appropriate alignment and integration of disciplines.

It is evident that human capacity must be at the basis of such an approach. The institution is focussing on involving appropriately qualified staff, both on a full time and adjunct basis, as well as building the capacity of young and new researchers to give impetus to its research program.

In the networked world, which exists due to globalisation and the need for cross-boundary interaction, Torrens University acknowledges the need for open boundaries to facilitate continuous engagement and collaboration with industry, government, communities and the global Higher Education sector. Through this practice knowledge and resources are shared and relevance ensured for the benefit of all participants. Open boundaries provide the basis for participation in collaborative projects and access to opportunities for resourcing of initiatives while at the same time the Institution can facilitate research that meets the international standards expected by the ERA criteria in the country.

Through its active research program, the University ensures that it maintains the quality and relevance of its curriculum and its learning and solutions to prepare graduates who are able to take relevant knowledge and skills, including newly created knowledge and capacity into the world of work. Scholarship is therefore an integrated part of the work and living of the institution.

We are focussing on living the ideal of Higher Education in service of new knowledge and improved human well-being. Our continuous drive to provide thought leadership supports our staff to be valuable partners to build the future of societies.

Professor Alwyn Louw
Vice Chancellor

2. Introduction

Torrens University is Australia's newest university and is establishing a distinctive research ecosystem providing a unique position within the national and international research communities.

Our research strategy is informed by our Be Good principles which advocates using our institutions' collective skills to create positive and lasting change towards a better world.

We continue to build upon a momentum of research that has been achieved in our short history. Over the next few years our goal is to create thought leadership across the four University themes of research as we develop high performing research teams of staff and students with our partner network. We will maintain our focus on four key principles; Our research matters, our researchers matter, our reputation matters and real world impact matters as we develop impactful research through collaborative efforts with industry.

The Torrens Research Way is multi, cross, trans and interdisciplinary and highly responsive to our partners, users and stakeholders of our research. In being responsive we seek to develop impactful research that delivers solutions and so explicitly start our research journey with consideration of the iterative nature of understanding, explaining, interpretation and implementation in the real world. A whole of lifecycle approach ensures that research impact is assessed from beginning to end; from research to innovation. Our researchers will develop discipline strengths in targeted and strategic areas and simultaneously create new knowledge and develop new approaches to embrace a multi dimensional and multi and inter disciplinary research culture.

To achieve our aim of societal and economic benefit we shall develop an institutional infrastructure research ecosystem that is responsive, integrated and efficient to support our researchers. Our unique organization is able to provide flexible modes of employment and active talent management of high performing researchers. Importantly all our business processes will support impact and engagement as we develop strategies to leverage our important University wide partnerships. We shall communicate internally and externally our quality outcomes.

This Research Strategy (2021-2025) will guide the staged implementation of building research excellence at Torrens University Australia (TUA) into the next decade. We will undertake continual appraisal of our performance against the objectives in our Research Strategy each year . In assessing our research excellence and our capacity to integrate research and teaching we shall be guided by our research stakeholders' use both the Australian Research Council's (ARC), Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) guidelines, as well as the TEQSA Accreditation conditions as signposts. In this way we offer a transparent framework and realistic way to communicate the accomplishment of our University in achieving our research targets.

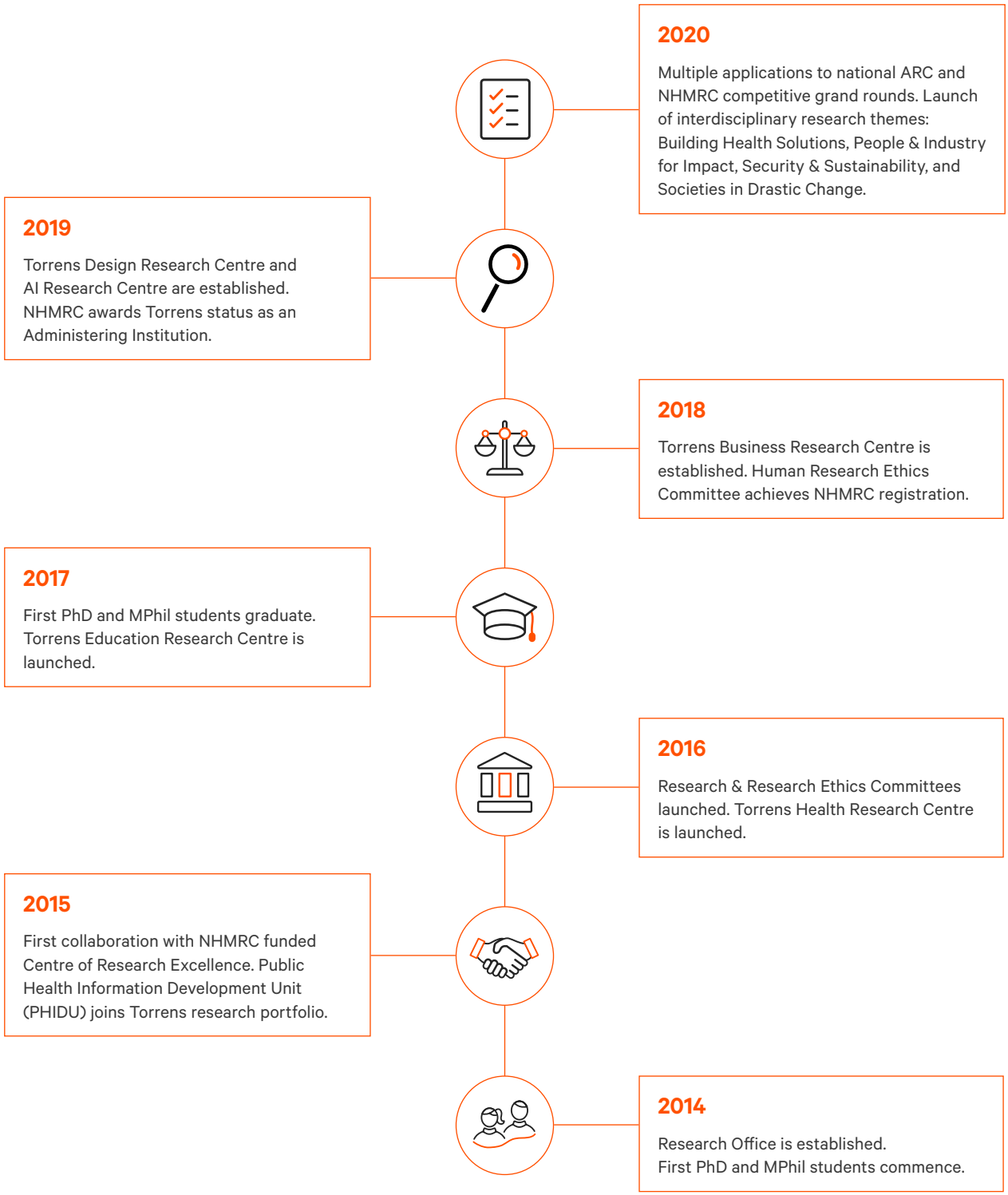
Professor Kerry London
Pro Vice Chancellor Research

3. Glossary

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ACGR	Australian Competitive Grants Register
ARC	Australian Research Council
CRC	Cooperative Research Centre
DET	Department of Education and Training
EAMEA	Europe, Africa, Middle East and Asia
EI	Engagement and Impact
ERA	Excellence in Research for Australia
FoR	Fields of Research
GST	Goods and Services Tax
HEP	Higher Education Provider
HERDC	Higher Education Research Data Collection
HESA	Higher Education Support Act 2003
HDR	Higher Degree by Research
JIF	Journal Impact Factor
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LRP	Long Range Plan
NHMRC	National Health and Medical Research Council
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
R&D	Research and Experimental Development
RBG	Research Block Grants
RSP	Research Support Program
RTP	Research Training Program
TUA	Torrens University Australia
RTP	Research Training Program
TUA	Torrens University Australia

4. Background and Context

Torrens University is Australia's newest University and has since inception aimed for excellence in both teaching and research. Late 2015 saw the passing of Australian Government legislation making Torrens University Australia (TUA) a Table B university. TUA is now Australia's fastest-growing University with over 16,300 student enrolments by November 2020. A chronology of major research milestones including major partnerships in our evolution over 2013-2020 include:



4.1 Our Self-assessment and Progress

TUA is building a strong, distinctive research culture that embraces interdisciplinary, applied and practice-based approaches. TUA is committed to ensuring that our research has wide-ranging impact for society.

We will systematically measure the quality, engagement and impact of our research. Research objectives and research performance measures to demonstrate our progress towards our strategic priorities are discussed later in this document. In the previous 12 months there has been a continuous process of self-assessment of our research activity and progress. The internal and external reviews were mapped against the previous Strategic Research Plan (2018-2023) and inform the current research strategy (2021-2026).

The self-assessments were undertaken in consultation with the Institutional Accreditation Team, Academic Quality Unit, Research Leaders of the Verticals, and our Research Centres and Centre Directors.

The assessments show that:

- Governance of research is appropriately structured
- Policy and accountability frameworks are in place
- Research footprint is growing with maturity of University
- There are exciting opportunities to be driven by a revised strategy.

5. Our Strategic Vision for Research (2021 – 2025)

Our strategic research vision promises that our focus is on *researchers matter, research matters, reputation matters and real world impact matters*. Drawing upon these promises, our strategic research vision is:

> Torrens University is renowned for thought leadership in research that reflects a contemporary need for creation of innovative knowledge and its utilisation.

5.1 Guiding Principles

Our three (3) principles guiding our research future include:

1. Collaboration

We collaborate with industry, community, professional bodies, Government and academic entities nationally and internationally.
We collaborate across Torrens and are collegiate in our endeavours. Thus we aim for excellence in multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary approaches as we develop focii of research excellence while expanding and building our research expertise and impact.

2. Outcomes

Our research culture is informed by our Be Good principles which drives our emphasis on research excellence, integrity, relevance and flexibility to discover innovative real-world solutions for the challenges facing society now and into the future.

3. Innovation

Torrens is a new university committed to excellence in research and the creation of new knowledge and its application. The character of our research reflects our commitment to offering innovative and meaningful contributions to our communities as well as to their development.

5.2 Methodology

The Research Strategy document was developed by the Vice-Chancellor's Office led by the Pro Vice Chancellor Research in consultation with the Research Office, Research Leaders and the University Executive.

Based upon an initial strategic plan (2013-2016) TUA launched a Research Plan in 2016. The 2016 Plan aimed to initiate the growth of a strong research culture at a new University in Australia. We are proud that at this early stage in our research journey the University has seen some significant achievements in developing a strong research framework to support our very talented staff and student researchers. By 2018, in recognition of TUA's strong growth and development, an external research review was commissioned by the then Vice-Chancellor and the (2018-2023) plan represented an acknowledgement of our existing achievements marking the next steps in TUA's evolution as a maturing university. In 2020 we have had external reviews on targeted areas such as the 5 year HDR Comprehensive Course Review, the Field of Research 35 Commerce, Management and Tourism and Non traditional research outputs in Design. The external reviews informed our update to this Strategic Research Plan (2021-2026).

This research strategy is linked to:

- Torrens University Strategic Plan
- Australian Research Council, Excellence in Research Australia (ERA) Objectives
- TEQSA Accreditation and Conditions relating to Growth and Quality and Research and Scholarship
- Australian Council of Graduate Research, Good Practice Guidelines for Research Training.

6. Research Priorities

Our strategic research priorities stem from Torrens University's overarching priority to be an innovative, industry-connected, applied university with research strengths and, by 2025, to have developed four self-funding research centres and a self funded integrated research unit in research fields that impact economic and social wellbeing throughout Australia and the Asia/Pacific region. They include a focus on research impact and engagement, thematically aligned research and four (4) core strategic priorities.

6.1 Research Impact and Engagement

Research impact involves a process of knowledge transfer, sharing and dissemination. We will pay careful attention to factors such as the quality of the research output, the relevance to all stakeholders and end-users, and effective dissemination of research findings. Of particular importance is our Be Good principles.

Within the areas of research focus our research outcomes and measures of progress will include:

Discovering: new knowledge and strengthening existing bodies of evidence

Exploring: new knowledge of public value and informing societal debate

Specific: positive impacts for specific populations, improvements in quality of life and enhancing social cohesion

Capacity: enhancing the research capacity within our institution to foster a rich research environment for staff and students

Collaboration: facilitating strong collaborative research networks and cross-institutional research development opportunities both nationally and internationally.

TUA is committed to ensuring that our research has wide-ranging impact for society. We will systematically measure the engagement and impact of our research. Research objectives and research performance measures to demonstrate our progress towards our strategic priorities are discussed later in this document.

6.2 Core Strategic Priorities

The success of the TUA research strategy is informed by four (4) core focii for growing research success underpinned by a research ecosystem that enables an environment for research to thrive:

1. *Researchers matters* and **Research Talent**;

2. *Research matters* and **Quality Outputs**;

3. *Reputation matters* and **Partnerships**;

4. *Real world impact matters* and **Cross Disciplinary Themes** and a

Research ecosystem with **Research Enablers**

Research Matters

Create world class interdisciplinary teams to deliver quality outputs

Researchers Matter

Invest and attract top talent to ensure superior research performance and an excellent student experience

Reputation Matters

Develop strategic relationships with reputable institutional, regional and global partnerships

Real World Impact Matters

Deliver impactful inter disciplinary research for new knowledge and translation

6.2.1 Research Ecosystem

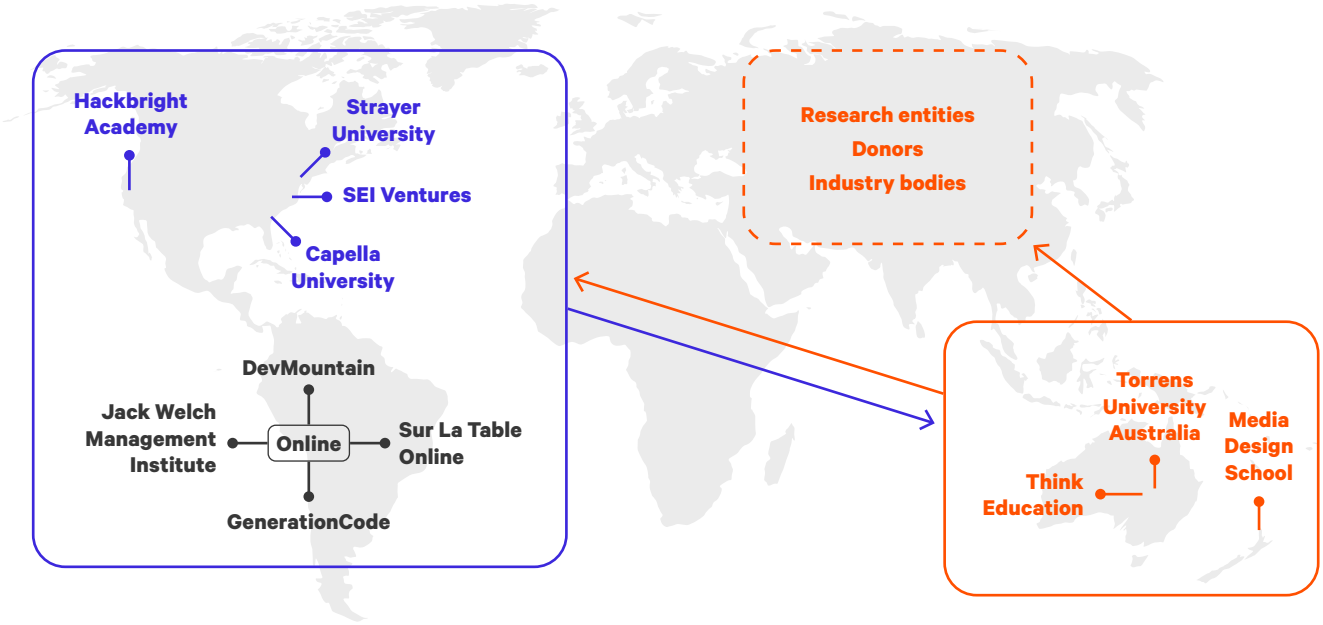
The Research Office was established in 2014 and is responsible for research strategy implementation, governance, research management and the higher degree by research program. The Office provides advice and support on a wide range of issues, including grant application and administration, research funding, ethics, government research policy, external government submissions, higher degree research candidature and scholarships and the TUA Strategic Research Plan.

The development of a research ecosystem that is responsive and integrated assuring aligned business processes to support research activities is critical to effective management of resources. Flexible modes of employment and active talent management will enable Torrens to attract and retain high quality researchers who are supported for impactful research, engagement, knowledge transfer and commercialisation initiatives.

The Research Office is guided by the leadership of the Pro Vice Chancellor. The Pro Vice Chancellor is directly responsible for leading the university research strategy, strengthening the research reputation and building a positive research culture nationally with global links. The role has leadership responsibilities for the Research Office and the incumbent is required to lead by example and maintain their own research activity. The Research Office is supported by an Associate Dean HDR and a Research Secretariat. The DVC Research provides support to the Research Office by assisting with mobilizing the research strategy, mentorship of researchers and external networking and engagement to attract funding.

6.2.2 Research Partnerships

Our partnerships are national and international with organizations that align with our Be Good Principles. Partnerships are developed at an individual, group, centre and institutional level and align with our four University research themes. Our strategic research partnerships build our reputation and profile.



With Australian campuses in Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane, Torrens University Australia has opportunities to develop national research partnerships with businesses to leverage our unique teaching and learning partnerships and delivery model. We shall continue to embrace our unique position in the Australian higher education sector as we develop stronger national and regional presence in the research community.

In 2021 our global reach of research partnerships will be extended through our new ownership structure afforded by Strategic Education Inc. We shall build close relationships with the SEI networks to ensure engaged scholarship and high impact research to support superior student experiences.

Our distinctive approach to real-world applications for our research ensures it has maximum impact. We embrace engaged scholarship. Our practice-informed research approach starts with the needs of industry, community, professional bodies, government and other stakeholders in Australia and overseas, engaging them in the research process as co-researchers, collaborators, partners, end-users and advisers.

Sustainable and productive partnerships require close attention to alignment of values and our Be Good principles is an important pillar as we focus on developing strategic institutional, industry and government collaborations into the future. Our research outputs, directly aligned to our Be Good principles, are designed to advance knowledge that positively contributes to social justice and wellbeing, improved health outcomes, the provision of inclusive education, strong governance systems, innovative and vibrant economies, and positive social transformation.

6.2.3 Research Themes

Research Focus (Themes) will bring collaborative partnerships into centres of research to address problems of local and global significance.

Thematically aligned research within and across research centres of excellence will facilitate the development of a critical mass of research activity discovering collaborative solutions for problems of local and global significance. Research-active staff from all our disciplines including health, education, design, business and hospitality will collaborate on multidisciplinary research funded by grant income (of all categories), research contracts, and consultancy funding.

Our four (4) interdisciplinary research themes include:

Our four (4) interdisciplinary themes evolved in early 2020, as a response to the University's recognition of the need for researchers to bridge across boundaries to address complex local and global issues of significance. The University is committed to developing research impact and engagement. These interdisciplinary themes will create positive impact and engagement, while also increasing the research capacity of the University to foster a rich research environment for staff and students and strong collaborative research programs.

Our themes, which align to five (5) major fields of research (including health, education, design, computing and business).

Security and Sustainability

This research theme is developing an evidence base to create frameworks for sustainable and secure practices. Through interdisciplinary work this theme addresses local and global challenges and is focused on creating social, environmental and ethical impacts that will safeguard the future that we share.

Building Health Solutions

This research theme matters to societies, communities, families and individuals. The research that Torrens engages in will provide evidence about disease trends and risk factors, and outcomes of treatments or public intervention factors. Through this evidence base and an interdisciplinary approach, we will create solutions for individual and community well being, patterns of healthcare and health care costs and use.

Societies in drastic change

Change is constant and is a part of every day life. Perhaps more than before, the pace of change is hectic, and our global complex challenges pose huge risks for our social structures and future. Research in this theme is developing solutions and preparedness for dramatic social change.

People and Industry for impact

The world is seeing massive innovation in how education and work ready programs and training are delivered and ow students are prepared for future employment. Rapid technological change is disrupting businesses across all industries. Interdisciplinary research in this theme will create positive impact through identifying the new skills and capabilities for the future.

Our research outputs will align to our research themes and their quality will be measured using Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classifications (ANZSRC), Fields of Research (FoR) and Australian Research Council (ARC) reporting timelines. Current TUA research performance indicators support focus of TUA research activity in Health (FoR 42, Health Sciences; FoR 32 Biomedical and Clinical Sciences), Computing (FoR 46 Information and Computing Science) and Business (FoR 35 Commerce. Management and Tourism). An emerging discipline of focus is Design. Importantly as teaching quality is a critical mission of Torrens University we maintain our attentions on high quality education research to underpin our Scholarship strategy.

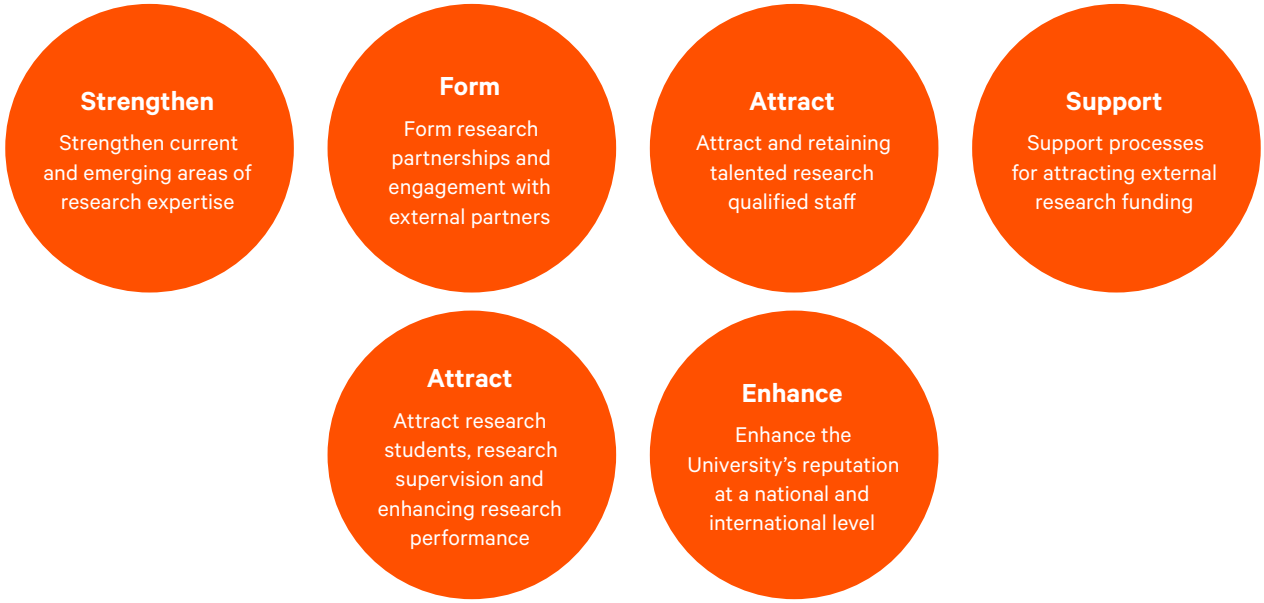
6.2.4 University Research Centres

Research Centres provide multidisciplinary and collaborative research environments aligned to our themes to foster supportive networks to develop our research talent.

Research centres under experienced academic leadership will drive research activity, supervise research students and provide mentorship for academics and research students as they develop research expertise. Research centres will be multidisciplinary encouraging cross-faculty collaboration affording all Verticals the opportunity to develop the research capacity into the future.

Under the leadership of experienced research academics the Research Centres will coordinate research activity to meet set KPIs which will drive i) Research Income, ii) Research outputs, and iii) HDR completions (an important indicator to increase Australian Government Block Grant Funding for the University).

The university research centres have a responsibility to:



University Centres deliver high level research products that impact society

The research centres and/or consultancy aligned to the research themes will have/be:

- Strong academic leadership from professorial level academics with research expertise, existing collaborations, existing grant income, current HDR students and supervisory experience
- Be measured by KPIs aligned to the Strategic Research Plan (2021-2025)
- Staffed with academics with proven research track records
- Responsibility for managing external grant income and collaborative relationships
- Responsibility for HDR student supervision and timely completions of HDR
- Responsibility for securing external grant income but underwritten by institutional research support expenditure, HDR student fees and/or consultancy fees
- Observe Institutional Research Governance Policy and Procedures.

6.2.4 University Research Centres (Continued)

Highlights:

The University has established four (4) research centres and an integrated unit to build capacity around the research themes identified in the Research Plan including:

1. Centre for Healthy Futures (CHEF)

2. Centre for Research in Education and Sustainability (CRES)

3. Centre for Organisational Change and Agility (COCA)

4. Centre for Artificial Intelligence Research and Optimisation (AIRO)

5. Public Health Information Development Unit (PHIDU)

The centres embody a strong emphasis on interdisciplinary research and tap into the synergies that already exist between different disciplines and academic teams across the University.

The ARC is responsible for administering Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA), Australia's national research evaluation framework. ERA identifies and promotes excellence across the full spectrum of research activity in Australia's higher education institutions. Through ERA the ARC is tasked with identifying excellence in research, by comparing Australia's university research effort against international benchmarks, creating incentives to improve the quality of research and identifying emerging research areas and opportunities for further development (source: www.arc.gov.au/excellence-research-australia).

6.2.5 Research Talent

Research Talent including research staff and students are aligned to the themes. The Centres align to themes and provide a rich research environment to develop research expertise and support high quality outputs.

TUA will provide an interdisciplinary context for research qualified individuals to collaborate and establish research connections to produce high quality solutions to real-world problems.

To develop research capacity across the institution TUA will:

- Support research centres aligned to our research themes with strong academic leadership (i.e. professorial appointments with strong research track records, existing category one (1) grant income, and a track record of Higher Degree by Research completions)
- Employ research qualified staff with supportive workload models that reflect the importance of research in academia and facilitate high quality research-activity (i.e. PhD qualified academic staff actively engaged in developing grant applications, current publications and supervision of Higher Degree by Research students)
- Provide professional development as well as mentorship for academic staff and research students to engage meaningfully in research and research training
- Create exciting career pathways for our research talent including research staff and students with a focus on high performers.

See over page for Figure 1 Research and Research Training Talent Development Milestones

Highlights:

TUA runs annual internal research funding schemes to support academics in the conduct of research that will facilitate national competitive grant applications, a Senior research leadership program, a high performance research fellowship scheme, University wide Pan Projects and an annual conference funding scheme (for staff and students).

TUA offers supervision for the M.Phil. and PhD degrees across the areas of Health, Education, Business, Design and Hospitality. The HDR program commenced in 2014-15 with the expected challenges of a start-up, however in a short time these challenges have been overcome through revised policies and procedures, research training, HDR communication and trimester progress reporting. We have strong retention and growth resulting from the HDR focus on student engagement and the HDR student experience. During 2019 and 2020, the HDR Office has focused on building skills amongst the Higher Degree Research (HDR) student cohort and supervision training for research staff. This was achieved through cohort training, developing a community of HDR Practice and regular research seminars, as well as centre-based activities with a clear focus on progression and retention of HDR students and building capacity.

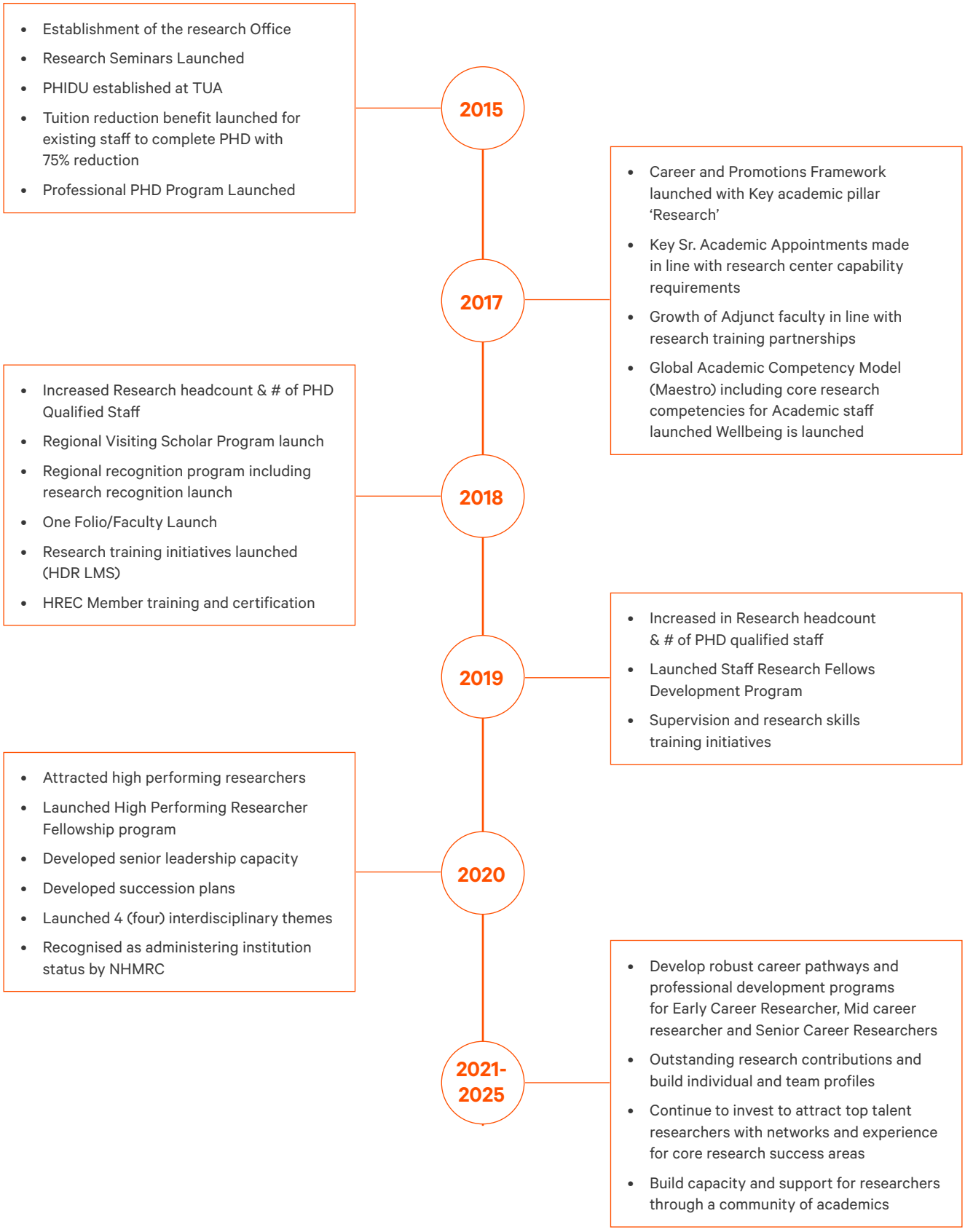
A number of key initiatives have been implemented in the HDR Programs to assure a quality student experience including:

1. A new research skills training program was implemented for inclusion in the HDR Programs TUA currently uses Epigeum; a series of research training courses tailored to both students and supervisors to assist with their academic and professional development.
2. The Epigeum training program is accompanied by onboarding and orientation for each trimester enrolment and a monthly community of Higher degree research practice for ongoing training and community
3. A five (5) year Comprehensive Course Review of the HDR program
4. A Review of administrative policies and procedures

6.2.5 Research Talent (Continued)

Figure 1. TUA Talent Milestones

Attract, Develop, Retain TUA Research Talent



6.2.6 Research Enablers

TUA supports strong governance for quality research, aligned to the Australian national guidelines for the conduct of ethically driven research. To achieve this TUA has and will continue to invest in infrastructure, systems and resources to create a research ecosystem which involves:

- Maintaining robust research governance structures, research communication and strong academic leadership to build a unique research culture
- Investing within the centres of research activity including provision of research infrastructure, human resources, incentive schemes for high quality research outputs, equipment and adequate physical space
- Establishing a research development unit to streamline grant writing and manage internal quality review of applications that will generate effective modes of attracting grants and managing resources
- Employing professional and specialised research management and administration teams to support research activity Employing research assistants for grant administration, writing literature reviews, grant proposal preparation, ethics applications and other research support duties
- Creating flexible modes of employment and active talent management of high performing researchers
- Assembling aligned business processes to support impact and engagement and ensuring an integrated responsive and efficient administrative processes
- Delivering a high quality contemporary research management system and research analytics tools
- Improving access to information technology, library and information resources and other relevant discipline-specific equipment that facilitates research and research training.

Highlights:

The TUA Library has been developing its collection over the past few years to ensure that all researchers and HDRs have access to high quality academic information to support their research needs. This collection includes many of the core databases that support research across the TUA verticals.

In addition a sub collection continues to be curated to provide support to the research process. The Library has developed a range of services to support the research endeavour:

1. Research Infrastructure: Institutional repository, Research Management System, Ethics Management System, Altmetrics
2. Research Data Management: The Library provides expertise in the collection, management, storage and access to TUA research data
3. Research Consultations: HDRs are able to meet with expert Library professionals to better understand the research lifecycle, the development of appropriate searches to ensure an overall understanding of their research topic
4. Literature Review Service
5. Bibliometrics: The Library provides individual, faculty and institutional research performance data benchmarked across global and Australian outputs. This data underpins the creation and implementation of strategic initiatives and provides advice on performance outcomes for the ERA

The Research Office has world-class research infrastructure including our Research Management System (PURE), an Institutional Repository (Figshare) and Ethics Review Management Software (Infonetica). The Research Office implements and delivers a range of services to support the University's research activities. Services include targeted support across the research funding life cycle from grant applications to post-award management, assistance with human research ethics applications, compliance and governance, and the responsible conduct of research. The Research Office is also involved in strategic planning and the collection, analysis and reporting of research activity, as well as research impact and engagement outcomes.

7. Strategic Operational Plan (2021-2025)

7.1 Research Objectives

Our research continues to evolve as we endeavor to deliver a global impact at scale. The specific research objectives underpinning our 2021-2025 within our strategic focus of Researchers Matter, Research Matters, Reputation Matters and Real World Impact Matters is aimed at creating a unique position in the higher education sector and are as follows:

Researchers matter

1. **Invest** in developing a world-class research culture
2. **Attract** top talent senior researchers with networks/experience
3. **Develop** a robust research career pathway for all researchers
4. **Build** capacity through a community of academics and HDR students

Research matters

1. **Create** a vibrant environment focused on transferable and translational skills
2. **Enable** high quality infrastructure & research management practices
3. **Build** strong research teams through training, networking, mentoring, coaching and expert communities
4. **Develop** authentic teaching-research-practice nexus and institutionalise scholarship

Reputation matters

1. **Develop** research partnerships with reputable institutions
2. **Focus** on thought leader recognition and output
3. **Generate** outputs with world-standard ERA ranking across 5 focus areas
4. **Support** experienced researchers to leading forums to impact research and academic development

Real world impact matters

1. **Deliver** impactful research through collaborative efforts across four interdisciplinary themes
   - Security & Sustainability
   - Building Health Solutions
   - Societies in drastic change
   - People & Industry for Impact
2. **Communicate** innovation through media presence, policy & practice influence, engagement and artefacts

Research ecosystem

1. **Integrate** responsive and efficient administrative processes and employment practice
2. **Create** flexible modes of employment and active talent management of high performing researchers
3. **Generate** effective modes of attracting grants and managing resources
4. **Assemble** aligned business processes to support impact and engagement

7.2 Performance Measures

As recommended in the National Innovation & Science Agenda publication track records remain an important indicator of research quality as recognised in competitive grants and rankings but our engagement will be primarily measured by our research income from industry and other end-users.

Performance expectations of research centres will include annual measures based upon 3 year averages of the following key performance indicators (KPIs):

1. Research outputs (number and quality)

2. External Income (from all sources including consultancy funding)

3. Higher Degree by Research Students (quality experience and completions)

4. Partnerships (number, income and HDR experience)

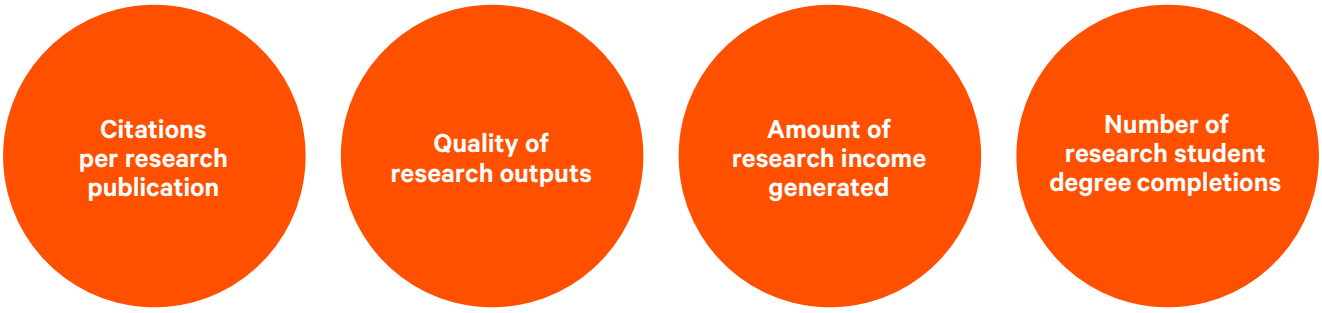
5. Be Good principles (engagement and impact).

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will be set for each research centre on an annual basis in consultation with the Centre Directors and the Research Office. KPIs including measurement definitions are detailed in the Research Centre Annual Key Performance Indicator Form (see Appendix 3). Individual researcher performance standards will be set over a three (3) year period using the measures and calculator below.

7.2.1 Individual Success Measures

Research Performance Standards outline the minimum expectations of performance for research-active individuals who have been given percentage (%) research allocation in their workload.

Expectations will cover a three (3) year period including:



Research-active staff are defined as academic staff members with an approved workload allocation to actively engage in generating research outcomes (workload allocation is 20% or higher). The individual research performance measures take into account workload allocations to determine research output expectations. TUA will adopt the model that builds outputs over a three years period but with annual staged targets using a standardised Research Performance Calculator.

TUA encourages researchers to publish in Q1 journals as listed in SciMago which is one of the many tools that provides rankings of quality journals. To encourage publications in higher ranked journals we will weight top 25% success in the Calculator. (Scimago Journal Rankings outline the top 25% journals in different disciplines.)

7.3 Deliverables by 2025

The following represent our vision for our deliverables that we shall work towards by 2025

Researchers Matter

1. Secure **10** non competitive research grants
2. Secure **5** competitive research grants
3. **Grow** Professors and PhD qualified staff
4. Scale HDR community of **300** students

Research Matters

1. **6** world-class interdisciplinary research teams
2. **5** self funded Research Centres (4 &PHIDU)
3. **200** quality outputs annually
4. **Integrated** curriculum/research process
5. **Established** scholarship practice

Reputation matters

1. **10** active external research collaborations
2. **10** international partners
3. **10** research leaders by 2025
4. **3 X 2023** & **4 X 2025** at world standard

Real world Impact Matters

1. Launch **4** commercialisation opportunities
2. Recognised for excellence in **four** thematic areas nationally and internationally

8. Operational Plan for 2021

The following priorities have been identified for strategic investment and support in 2021 as we build our capacity to meet our 2025 research objective:

8.1 Objectives

Researchers matter

- Strengthen our research leadership capacity and research support through recruitment, mentoring, training and infrastructure
- Grow HDR numbers and successful completions
- Increase external grant success and communicate successes to develop reputation

Research matters

- Grow Research Centres aligned to research themes and develop institutional research centre policy
- Grow research outputs in high quality publications aligned to research themes
- Strengthen teaching-research nexus and institutionalise scholarship

Reputation matters

- Communicate research successes to develop reputation
- Activate institutional and industry partnerships and develop coherent strategy to leverage networks

Real world impact matters

- Reinforce institutional capacity by aligning all business processes to support researchers in all phases of research from inception, grant development, research activity, engagement, commercialization and communication

8.2 Deliverables

- Grow research outputs in high quality publications by 25%
- Recruit 5-8 adjunct Professors to mentor staff and students
- Secure one (1) national competitive grant
- Develop active Early Career Researcher/Mid Career Researcher network
- Grow HDR enrolment numbers by 25%
- Develop and implement a Research Centre policy
- Develop a Scholarship strategy including a position paper on TUA Scholarship
- Develop and implement a Research communication strategy
- Develop and initiate a Research Partnership strategy
- Launch a Research Innovation program

9. Definition of Terms

Altmetric

Altmetric is an online is a tool for researchers to track a range of resources helping them to monitor and report on the attention surrounding their research activity.

Australian Research Council (ARC)

(ARC) is a Commonwealth entity and advises the Australian Government on research matters, administers the National Competitive Grants Program (NCGP), a significant component of Australia's investment in research and development, and has responsibility for Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA).

Engagement

Research engagement is the interaction between researchers and research end-users outside of academia, for the mutually beneficial transfer of knowledge, technologies, methods or resources (p10)

Engagement and Impact (EI)

As part of its National Innovation and Science Agenda (NISA), the Government announced the development of a national Engagement and Impact (EI) assessment, which will examine how universities are translating their research into economic, environmental, social and other benefits. EI aims to create incentives for greater collaboration between universities and industry, as well as other research end-users.

Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA)

The ARC is responsible for administering Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA), Australia's national research evaluation framework. ERA identifies and promotes excellence across the full spectrum of research activity in Australia's higher education institutions. Through ERA the ARC is tasked with identifying excellence in research, by comparing Australia's university research effort against international benchmarks, creating incentives to improve the quality of research and identifying emerging research areas and opportunities for further development.

Fields of Research Codes (FoR)

The FoRs are categories of research methodology in the ANZSRC. They include major fields of research investigated by national research institutions and organisations, and emerging areas of study. For the purposes of ERA, disciplines are defined as two- and four-digit Fields of Research (FoRs) codes as identified in the Australia and New Zealand Standard Research Classification (ANZSRC) 2020 released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics and Statistics New Zealand. The ANZSRC provides 22 two-digit FoR codes, 157 four-digit FoR codes, and an extensive range of six-digit codes.

R&D Income Categories (Research & Development)

Category 1: Australian competitive grants

Category 2: Other public sector grants

Category 3: Industry and other grants

Category 4: N/A

h-Index

The h-Index is an individual researcher metric that provides a comparative measure of research productivity and citation impact of the individual's publications. The h-index is a variation on the concept of times cited. All papers written by an author are ranked in order of the number of times each one has been cited. A researcher with an index of h has published h papers with at least h citations each e.g. even though a top paper has 50 citations an h-index is 3 because any top 3 publications have at least 3 citations each. A journal will also have an h-index

Higher Degree by Research (HDR) or research student

In Australia, the term 'research training' usually refers to studies for Research Masters and Research Doctorate degrees (AQF Levels 9 and 10). The phrase 'higher degree(s) by research' (HDR) has the same scope. (see TEQSA Guidance Domain 4.2 Research Training)

Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC)

The Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) comprises of research income data, submitted by universities to the Australian Government, Department of Education each year. Each year, the department updates the HERDC Specifications in consultation with universities and other relevant stakeholders. Data collected, along with data from the Higher Education Student Data Collection, is used to determine annual allocations to universities for the Research Block Grants (RBG) scheme.

Impact

Research impact is the contribution that research makes to the economy, society, environment or culture, beyond the contribution to academic research (p10)

Journal Rankings

Discipline-specific ranked lists of journals and conferences. TUA encourages researchers to publish in Q1 journals as listed in SciMago which is one of the many tools that provides rankings of quality journals.

Journal Impact Factor (JIF)

The impact factor is a measure of the frequency with which the "average article" in a journal has been cited in a particular year or period. Journal Citation Reports (JCR) ® is the only place where impact factors are reported. JCR® covers approximately 7,500 journal titles, which is only a small percentage of all journals in publication. Most journals do not have an impact factor.

NHMRC

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) is Australia's leading expert body promoting the development and maintenance of public and individual health standards. NHMRC brings together within a single national organisation the functions of research funding and development of advice. One of its strengths is that it draws upon the resources of all components of the health system, including governments, medical practitioners, nurses and allied health professionals, researchers, teaching and research institutions, public and private program managers, service administrators,

QS Stars

QS Stars is a rating system that provides a detailed look at an institution, enabling you to identify which universities are the best in the specific topics that you care about, like program strength, facilities, graduate employability, social responsibility, inclusiveness, and more.

Research

Research is the endeavor of creating new knowledge 'the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies and understandings' and new applications of knowledge (see TEQSA Guidance Domain 4.1 Research). This is the same definition used for ERA.

Research-Active

Torrens University academic staff member with an approved workload allocation to actively engage in generating research outcomes (workload allocation is 20% or higher). The Individual research performance calculator takes into account workload allocations to determine research output expectations. A schedule of minimum outputs for research active staff has been published as an appendix of the HDR Supervision Policy.

Research End-User

A research end-user is an individual, community or organisation external to academia that will directly use or directly benefit from the output, outcome or result of the research. Examples of research end-users include governments, businesses, non-governmental organisations, communities and community organisations.

Research Leadership

Torrens University academic staff member with either an or professorial appointment (Associate or full level), a strong research track records, existing category one (1) grant income, and a track record of HDR completions.

Scholarship

Scholarship is the incorporation of new knowledge into what is taught. Scholarship underpins a provider's capacity to deliver quality higher education, and encompasses enquiry into teaching and learning practices, and maintaining currency in the discipline area/s of the provider's course/s of study. (see TEQSA Guidance Note: Scholarship)

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL)

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning is the use of existing techniques to evaluate the effectiveness of teaching with a view to continuous improvement. These evaluations are made public and shared with the broader scholarly community via conference or publication.

SCOPUS

Scopus is the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature: scientific journals, books and conference proceedings. Delivering a comprehensive overview of the world's research output in the fields of science, technology, medicine, social sciences, and arts and humanities, Scopus features smart tools to track, analyse and visualise research.

10. Annual KPI Form for Research Centres

Objective	Measurement	Actions	Annual targets	Achievement
KPI 1: Research Outputs				
Quality Publications	Top 25% Quartile publications			
Volume of Publications	ERA Journal List by FoR Code			
Conference Paper	ERA Approved Conference List			
KPI 2: External Research Income				
Total External Grant Income	Amount from all sources			
Number successful competitive grant applications	Category 1 income			
Number successful grant applications	Category 2-3 income			
KPI 3: Higher Degree by Research Students				
HDR Timely Completions	HEIMS Records			
HDR Number of quality publications	Number of publications			
KPI 4: Partnerships				
Collaborative Research Partnerships	Number collaborations			
Consultancy income	Amount from all sources			
HDR Student Industry Experience	HDR Internships/ placements			
KPI 5: Here for Good				
Projects with applied societal benefit	ERA, Engagement and Impact (EI)			
Attention surrounding research	Altmetric statistics			
Professional Contribution	Clinical guidelines, professional association publications etc.			

Centre Director signature

Date

PVC Research signature

Date

TORRENS UNIVERSITY AUSTRALIA

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