



Myth-busting: Ranked Outlets in ERA

The ARC is frequently asked about the effect of ranked outlets on publishing behaviour and academic freedom. Please see below some myths and fact about ranked outlets.

Myth: *The evaluation in ERA is too focused on ranked outlets...*

Fact: Ranked outlets are one of the many indicators used in ERA 2010.

The premise behind ranked outlets is to profile the number of articles published in a certain quality tier of journal in a given unit of evaluation. An integral part of this group of indicators is the 2010 ERA Ranked Journal and Conference Lists, where the quality rating of active (during the reference period) scholarly and peer reviewed (or equivalent process) outlets are given a rating of A*, A, B or C for journals and A, B and C for conferences.

During evaluation, Research Evaluation Committees (RECs) will also evaluate a range of other indicators, including volume and activity measures, esteem measures, research income, applied measures and background statements.

Myth: *Researchers should only bother publishing in A* and A journals and conferences...*

Fact: The ARC recognises that different fields may have different publishing behaviour and this is the reason that we only undertake evaluation within each field of research code (FoR). While in some fields, publishing in A* and A journals may be considered the most appropriate for high quality and high impact research, in other fields, it is appropriate to publish in practitioner-focused medium quality journals. The ARC has worked with over 60 peak bodies and over 700 expert reviewers in the development of ranked lists. The lists are developed in consultation with discipline experts in the field. This means that any field-specific publishing behaviour was taken into account when the experts were assigning quality tiers, provided the tier definitions were met.

Myth: *ERA will be detrimental to me because I publish in B and C ranked journals...*

Fact: Outputs in B and C ranked journals can have as much or even more impact than outputs published in A* and A journals. Besides the indicator of ranked outlets, all FoRs in ERA use either citation analysis or peer review as an indicator.

It is not uncommon for outputs published in B and C ranked journals to perform well when peer reviewed. At the same time, outputs in B and C ranked journals can often accumulate more citations than outputs in A* and A journals. This is certainly a hallmark of practitioner-focussed fields but can also occur in traditional science fields.

Myth: *The range of other research outlets, other than listed journals and conferences, where I publish won't count...*

Fact: Fields that use peer review often publish in a range of research outlets, not just listed journals and conferences. For the fields that use peer review, books, book chapters and non-traditional outputs also contribute to the volume threshold for ERA 2010. These, along with journal article and conference outputs, can be submitted to ERA 2010 for peer review, putting these outputs on equal grounding with journal and conference outputs.

ERA 2010 Repository Testing Strategy

The ERA 2010 Repository Testing Strategy has been made available to all institutions; it outlines three structured phases of institutional repository management and repository testing for ERA 2010.

The new strategy prescribes a systematic, comprehensive, uniform and independent approach to repository management and testing.

Institutions are now able to begin testing their 2010 research outputs through the SEER Manage Repository Testing user interface. ERA Liaison Officers have been sent an email to create user accounts within SEER. If you believe that you should have a login for SEER, you should contact your ERA Liaison Officer in the first instance. The list of ERA Liaison Officers for institutions can be found on our website www.arc.gov.au/era/era_liaison.htm.

ERA Notifications

The first ERA Notification has been released www.arc.gov.au/era/notifications.htm. ERA Notifications are designed to provide advice to the sector when interpretation or clarification is needed with regard to the ERA 2010 process.

This new web page will be updated when components of ERA documentation have been clarified (not changed, but clarified).

The current ERA Notifications relates to sections 3.6 ('Low Volume—Non-Assessable Units of Evaluation) and 3.5.2 ('ERA Peer Review') of the *ERA 2010 Submission Guidelines*.

ERA Frequently Asked Questions

A number of the ERA Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) were updated in March. If you have not recently reviewed the FAQs you may like to visit this page on our website www.arc.gov.au/era/faq.htm.

Outreach

The following presentations on ERA were given by ERA staff during March:

9 March	Newcastle University
17 March	University of Southern Queensland
17 March	Charles Sturt University
25 March	Southern Cross University
25 March	University of Melbourne
26 March	RMIT University

The following presentations on ERA are planned for April:

13 April	Edith Cowan University (with representatives from Murdoch and Notre Dame)
13 April	Curtin University (TBC)
14 April	University of Western Australia

Further presentations are planned in April 2010. If you have upcoming events or would like the ERA team to present at your institution, please email era@arc.gov.au or phone the ERA Helpdesk on 02 6287 6755.

ERA News is emailed to ERA Liaison Officers and also published to the ARC website at www.arc.gov.au/era/era_news.htm.

The ERA team appreciates feedback. If you have any comments or suggestions for this newsletter, please email era@arc.gov.au or phone 02 6287 6755.