

#131

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Page 1: Personal Details

Q1

Your name

Other eg consultant Natalie Mast

Q2

Your organisation (leave blank if not applicable)

N Mast Consulting

Q3

Are you making this submission on behalf of your organisation?

This submission reflects my personal views and not those of my organisation

Q4

Email address

natalie.mast@nmastconsulting.com

Q5

What best describes your interest in making a submission?

Other, Please describe.:

I am a consultant to the Higher Education Sector

Q6

Submissions may be made public unless you request otherwise.

Respondent skipped this question

Q7

What form of submission do you wish to make?

Provide my responses through the online survey

Page 2: Upload Response

Q8 Respondent skipped this question

Please upload your submission.

Page 3: ERA and/or EI choice

Q9 I want to answer questions on both ERA and EI

Please indicate whether you wish to answer questions on ERA and/or EI.

Page 4: ERA Policy /1

Q10

To what extent is ERA meeting its objectives to:

Continue to develop and maintain an evaluation framework that gives government, industry, business and the wider community assurance of the excellence of research conducted in Australian higher education institutions.

Comment:

Provide a national stocktake of discipline level areas of research strength and areas where there is opportunity for development in Australian higher education institutions.

Comment:

Identify excellence across the full spectrum of research performance.

Comment:

A small amount

The value of the ERA diminishes over time as we learn less for each exercise. Overall the improvement in ERA results (fields rated 3 and above) since 2010 appears too good to be true. The ability to game submissions has very likely inflated ratings. Also, there is little accounting for the size of research groups: Particularly in some STEM related subjects, a minimum threshold of 50 publications over a six-year period is too small to be able to demonstrate true excellence. Further, by relying on a census date rather than by-line, the ERA does not accurately depict the research actually carried out in an institution or even in the country.

A small amount

In relation to peer review fields, the ratings appear in a black box. Following the 2015 exercise, I was able to explain to academics in a metrics field of research why I believed they had received a 4 rather than a 5 and suggest what areas to focus on for the 2018 exercise (they followed this advice and received the expected 5). The information provided by the ARC in relation to peer review fields is so limited that I could not explain why a group didn't receive the 5 they expected in 2015, or how to improve for 2018. This issue was exacerbated by the fact that peer reviewers were contacting individuals in the group expressing their shock at the rating. It would be much for useful if a justification of a rating was provided for peer review fields and it was clear what expectations were in relation to gaining a 4 or 5. Currently, there's no path to improvement provided for research groups working in peer-review fields.

A small amount

As more universities within metrics fields have moved into the 4/5 range, true excellence is overshadowed. There has been a massive increase in global output over the last decade and I am not certain that benchmarking to the RCI is enough of an indicator to denote excellence (benchmarking national income doesn't seem useful in highlighting international excellence either). The lack of accountability in the peer review fields also questions the ability of highlight excellence in those fields.

Identify emerging research areas and opportunities for further development.

Comment:

A small amount

In addition to my response to Q3.1b, it's possible that the time lag issue makes it more difficult to determine emerging areas/areas of opportunity. Also, I would argue that most universities are focused with creating the best possible submission. So, during the submission preparation period there are discussions on areas of weakness needing to be shored up (recruiting new staff/ remove under-performing staff discussions are mostly in relation to the next round); noting which areas are believed to have gained strength and those that don't seem as strong as the previous exercise. I am not convinced that there is much of a "let's build strength in new areas" activity resulting from the ERA specifically.

Allow for comparisons of research in Australia, nationally and internationally, for all discipline areas.

Comment:

A small amount

For the metrics fields and a number of peer review fields including computer science, economics, political science, business, education, I can get a much better picture at the FoR and, possibly more usefully (because of the limitations for FoR journal coding), at the Web of Science subject matter level, at an institutional, national and international level using Clarivate Analytics' Incites, than I get from the ERA. While not perfect, the citation data in Incites is rich and varied and I can break it down annually with no effort, so I can see how an institution, or Australia as a whole, is tracking. I am also able to quickly identify leading institutions, both in Australia and overseas and create a benchmarking cohort.

Q11

The ERA objectives are appropriate for meeting the future needs of its stakeholders.

Disagree,

If you disagreed with the above statement, please explain your answer.:

The ERA is a massive exercise that costs universities a great deal of money (extra staff are employed/seconded for over a year just to run the exercise). I note that while the ARC surveyed universities as to the cost (FTE) of the 2015 exercise, the results were never published in full. There are no funds attached to the ERA, so it is a large-scale endeavour with increasingly less return on investment as we aren't really learning anything new with each iteration, other than highlighting possible grade inflation and how well universities are playing the game. Following the 2015 exercise, ARC representatives in the post-exercise roadshow noted that the benefits of the ERA were "reputational". However, having been the victim of an attempted ranking of ERA results by The Australian newspaper, my view was the ERA actually caused my institution harm. I fielded multiple calls/emails from colleagues around the country asking how the ranking was possible and the ARC was notably silent. While not opposed to the swap in citation providers for the 2018 exercise (as a taxpayer I applaud the fact each exercise tenders for a provider to ensure value for money), and noting the switch for my institution was not at all arduous as our systems were set up to be able to handle the swap, greater clarity should have been provided as to what the switch meant in terms of the breadth of publications added to determine the RCI. At this stage, my view is that the RCI is calculated using too many papers from low-level journals and it is likely that Australia's research performance in metrics-based fields is over-inflated. Following 2018 ERA I began to fear that in some cases the exercise is actually hindering improvement in some fields. In relation to metric fields, given the profile of the ERA in the higher education sector, I think that when results return a higher than expected (deserved) score, it makes it far more difficult to convince staff in a research field that they are not performing at a high enough standard. How do you push for improvement when a field, which by any other measure is declining, improves in the ERA? Also note that while the ERA has a high profile amongst researchers, outside of the Australian sector (and the ARC), nobody seems to know about it or pay any attention to it, so in terms of external stakeholders, I think the ERA would have to be viewed as a failure. For example, I don't believe it has been a catalyst for business engagement.

Q12

What impact has ERA had on:

the Australian university research sector as a whole

Significant costs with little to no return. System gamed as institutions optimise submissions. Not a true reflection of the country's research profile.

individual universities

Significant costs with little to no return. Development of skills in optimisation within research support teams. I wouldn't be surprised if the number of adjunct/hon appointments across Australia have fallen as a proportion of research active staff (interesting research project there).

researchers

For those researchers who have to assist with the submission, it's a huge impost. FoR coding can only be partially automated and there is a very heavy load involved in coding papers. The way the ERA has been set up, there is a disincentive to split papers among fields (as citations are apportioned). While I understand the issues with multiple counting, if the exercise was viewed on a field by field basis, there'd be no problem with counting publications more than once. This could lead to a greater degree of automation.

Other?

There have been significant costs for the Commonwealth. I think that a similar level of knowledge could have been obtained using HERDC and HERD data in conjunction with bibliometrics (noting some peer review fields would not be sufficiently covered), without having to involve institutions or requiring a light touch. A positive note: I believe the ERA has led to greater competition and focus among citation providers. As a result, there is a greater coverage of Australian journals in indices and the meta data is then available globally, thereby increasing the reach of Australian data (note I am not sure this expansion was a good thing for the ERA itself, see Q3 statement). Also, I believe the citation providers are more receptive to ideas put forth by Australian universities in terms of product improvement.

Q13

How do you, or your organisation use ERA outcomes?

I'd argue this has changed over time. Nowadays:

The ERA doesn't really provide new information anymore. So, when the results come out, there's a bit of benchmarking, maybe some firefighting if an area has performed poorly (mostly this is clear at the time of submission so there aren't too many surprises).

There is usually a well done to areas that got a 5 or improved, and some internal reporting (some institutions may report summary results in annual reports, noting the ERA only occurs every 3 years).

Q14

ERA outcomes are valuable to you or your organisation.

Disagree,

Do you have any suggestions for enhancing ERA's value to you/your organisation?:

The cost of running the exercise isn't worth it from an institutional perspective. I can get a better idea of how the institution is performing in metrics fields (as well as computer science, economics, business and education) using Incites or SciVal. I have no faith in peer-review results as no evidence is provided to justify the rating provided.

Q15

How else could ERA outcomes be used?

If the ERA process were improved it could be used to influence funding. I am not really sure what the point of the exercise is at the moment. Institutions don't get much out of it, the results certainly aren't worth the cost.

The Commonwealth could get similar results much faster and more effectively by commissioning a third party to use existing data resources to develop reports without needing a large ERA team, this would lead to significant savings for the universities.

Page 6: ERA Methodology /1

Q16

The current methodology meets the objectives of ERA.

Disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

I disagree with using a census date rather than an institutional by-line. Research can be imported by the hiring of researchers and hidden by removing researchers from the payroll/adjunct appointments prior to census date. Also, by apportioning citations amongst FoRs, rather than counting all citations in each FoR, the ERA doesn't gain a true profile of the output in each FoR as institutions will optimise their submissions by limiting a publication to only one FoR (except for those publications deemed to exceed the citation requirements, particularly in the 1st and 5th centiles).

Q17

What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the overall ERA methodology?

Strengths

It includes all outputs not a highlighted selection of best works. Also, unlike the REF, collaboration between colleagues in an institution isn't discouraged.

Weaknesses

The peer review process is opaque and arbitrary. The process is labour intensive, for example, FOR Coding is arduous and could be automated.

Q18

Does the discipline-specific approach for evaluating research quality (citation analysis or peer review for specific disciplines) continue to enable robust and comparable evaluation across all disciplines?

Yes and no. Discipline-specific evaluations make sense in theory, but the way the ERA is designed in terms of citations being apportioned amongst FoR codes leads to institutions limiting the number of FoRs assigned to almost all publications. This means the exercise doesn't provide as accurate a picture of individual FoRs as is actually possible.

Q19

The citation analysis methodology for evaluating the quality of research is appropriate.

Agree,

Please explain your answer.:

Citation analysis is quick, relatively reliable and can be standardised.

Q20

What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the citation analysis methodology?

Strengths

Relatively reliable and transparent (at least compared to peer review process).

Weaknesses

**Easy to manipulate by moving publications around.
The breadth of publications used to determine the RCI is probably too wide.**

Q21

Can the citation analysis methodology be modified to improve the evaluation process while still adhering to the ERA Indicator Principles?

Yes,

If you answered 'Yes', please describe how the methodology could be improved.:

The ERA should be run using a window of time and limited to publications with an institution's by-line. These publications should be determined by the citation provider. FoR distribution should be carried out by the citation provider using journal FoRs, and keywords/abstracts etc for journals with only 2-digit codes assigned by the ARC. Citations should not be apportioned, at least at the four-digit level.

Q22

The peer review methodology for evaluating the quality of research is appropriate.

Strongly disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

No. There is no clarity provided by peer-review panels. Unlike metric based fields, in peer review fields it is impossible to determine why a particular rating was received. Peer review panels should provide reports justifying their rating.

Q23

What are the strengths and/or weaknesses of the peer review methodology?

Strengths

It's good that the ERA recognises publication practices and citation processes differ across disciplines.

Weaknesses

This is an expensive, time-consuming exercise which produces unreliable results and offers no path for improvement. Also, the submission is optimised. The 30% selection is not random, it is taken from the top, so unless panels account for the fact that they are viewing the "best" of an institution's offering in a field (and we don't know how the panels actually deliberate), the ratings (noting they are already on average below the results of metric fields) are inflated.

Q24

Can the peer review methodology be modified to improve the evaluation process while still adhering to the ERA Indicator Principles?

Yes,

If you answer 'Yes', please describe how the peer review methodology could be improved.:

It's a long time since the RQF and early days of the ERA and publication practices have changed (for example there has been a significant decline in peer-reviewed conference papers). Additionally, indexing of AHSS has expanded considerably. A number of peer review fields could now be assessed using citation metrics, such as old FoR codes, 08, 13, 14 and 15. If peer review is to continue, a table, similar to the centiles table provided in metrics assessed FoRs, should be provided, showing how the output was rated. A three or five-point scale should be established, and each nominated publication classified with summary results for each scale provided. The selection of publications for peer-review should be randomised. Institutions should provide a list of all the publications in the field and an algorithm should be run by the ARC to nominate the 30% for peer review. This will prevent the cherry-picking of the "best" publications by institutions.

Q25

The volume and activity indicators are still relevant to ERA.

Agree,

Please explain your answer.:

Because of the way the data is collected and submitted in SEER the generation of the volume and activity indicator data is not burdensome for institutions. I do take issue with the fact the information isn't publicly available at an institutional level when the ERA results are released. Publicly available data on institutions is limited to a rating for each assessed FoR. The size of the research cohort involved in an FoR, the volume of publications and income used to determine that rating, isn't available, so from a potential collaborator's point of view, all 5s appear of equal value, even if one institution achieved that rating with 50 publications with 3 researchers while another had 250 publications with 12 researchers. From a taxpayer point of view, the data provided to the public isn't "a wealth of information", it's very limited summary data that doesn't allow for informed decision making. From an institutional point of view, the removal of access to SEER (at least in 2015, I am not sure when/if it closed after the 2018 exercise) was a burden requiring screenshots so that data wasn't lost. Also, not being able to extract SEER data easily is a problem.

Q26

The publishing profile indicator is still relevant to ERA.

Neither agree nor disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

I assume the publishing profile is of greater value to the peer review panels. Again, I have issues with this data not being publicly released.

Q27

The research income indicators are still relevant to ERA.

Agree,

Please explain your answer.:

The inability to deal with negative income creates an unnecessary burden for administrators who often need to manipulate income levels to meet the requirements that the total income in a category per annum is within 5% of the reported HERDC figure. Negative income should be reported. If displaying negative income is a problem for either the panels or the public release, the figure should be rounded by SEER to zero.

Q28

The applied measures are still relevant to ERA.

Patents

Comment:

Disagree

All Applied measures should be moved to the ERA E&I.

Research commercialisation income

Comment:

Disagree

All Applied measures should be moved to the ERA E&I.

Registered designs

Comment:

Disagree

All Applied measures should be moved to the ERA E&I.

Plant breeder's rights

Comment:

Disagree

All Applied measures should be moved to the ERA E&I.

NHMRC endorsed guidelines

Comment:

Disagree

All Applied measures should be moved to the ERA E&I.

Page 8: ERA Methodology /3

Q29

The five-band ERA rating scale is suitable for assessing research excellence.

Disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

A matrix accounting for the size of a research group and the scale of research output needs to be included.

Q30

Noting that 90% of units of evaluation assessed in ERA 2018 are now at or above world standard, does the rating scale need to be modified to identify research excellence?

Yes,

If you answered 'Yes', please explain how the rating scale can be modified to identify research excellence.:

a. If you answered, 'Yes', please explain how the rating scale can be modified to identify excellence. There are two basic options here: 1) A scale within a scale, i.e. 5.1 to 5.5 to determine between levels of research excellence. 2) Keep the existing scale but redefining world standard. I think discussions need to be held in regard to whether or not a global benchmark is what measure we want to use to define research excellence. An analysis should be undertaken by a metrics provider exploring the theory that as the global research sector expands there are a lot of papers in low-quality journals generating low levels of citations and bringing down the RCI. If this is the case there are a number of options available that would allow for a more appropriate RCI, for example: 1) Use journal impact factor like scores to exclude low-level journals 2) Create a benchmarking cohort of 10 to 20 countries to determine a "world standard".

Q31

The ERA low volume threshold is appropriate.

Disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

I think the threshold is too low in some fields, particularly at the 2-digit level.

Q32

Are there ways in which the low volume threshold could be modified to improve the evaluation process?

Yes, thresholds should be tailored to individual FoRs, particularly at the 2-digit level.

Q33

What is the more appropriate method for universities to claim research outputs—staff census date or by-line?

By-line,

Please explain your answer.:

The ERA is supposed to measure research activities carried out in Australian universities over a six-year window. The census date approach allows for the importing of quality research produced at other institutions either in Australia or from overseas. The census date also allows universities with an opportunity to remove under-performing staff, so they are not part of a submission. The changes to eligible staff in 2018 also lead to the inclusion of what could be defined as incidental researchers. PhD students simultaneously employed could now be included, even though this was not the original intent of the exercise. Likewise, professional staff included in a publication now need to be counted. The ERA staff data should be limited to those whose employment contract includes an expectation of research.

Q34

What are the limitations of a census date approach?

By relying on a census date rather than by-line, the ERA does not accurately depict the research actually carried out in an institution or even in the country.

Using a census date also negatively impacts on the ability to use metrics providers to automatically determine outputs for metrics-based fields, which would remove a significant burden from institutions.

Q35

Would a by-line approach address these limitations?

Yes,

Please explain your answer.:

see above. Q3.28

Q36

What are the limitations of a by-line approach?

The publications of staff no longer attached to the institution would be counted.

Staff counts for FoRs wouldn't necessarily match the numbers involved in publications.

Investigation of staff numbers reported annually to the Dept of Education and the inclusion of FoRs in that data might be a (relatively) easy fix to this problem.

Q37

ERA adequately captures and evaluates interdisciplinary research.

Disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

Particularly in metrics fields, the apportionment of citations amongst the listed FoR codes for a publication provides a disincentive to list publications in an interdisciplinary way.

Q38

If you disagreed with the previous statement, how could interdisciplinary research best be accommodated?

Don't apportion citations among multiple FoRs.

Page 9: ERA Methodology /4

Q39

My institution would meet ERA low volume threshold in Indigenous studies at:

Respondent skipped this question

Q40

In ERA, the best approach for evaluating Indigenous Studies is (choose one):

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies by combining low volume disciplines into two Units of Evaluation (one unit comprising Humanities, Social Sciences and Arts disciplines and one unit comprising Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics disciplines)

Q41

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of your preferred approach for evaluating Indigenous studies in ERA?

Advantages

The advantage is a view of ATSI studies.

Disadvantages

The disadvantage is that publications only tangentially linked to ATSI studies could be included, particularly from the medical sciences.

Page 10: ERA Process /1

Q42

ERA should move to an annual collection of data from universities.

Neither agree nor disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

There are pros and cons to this method. An annual collection of data would work if overall the ERA was more automated, particularly for metrics-based fields. If the process were annualised, existing data collections should be utilised: For example: Income for Cat 1: FoRs used for applications should be supplied to institutions staff census data provided to the Dept of Education should have FoRs assigned to it. There'd need to be a reconciliation prior to submission. For example, when staff select their FoRs they provide information based on their disciplinary alignment. However, FoRs for publications are attached to journals. It is possible that while a researcher identifies as an engineer their output is predominately in physics. In the two exercises I oversaw, researchers did not select their own FoRs. Rather, following the assignment of FoRs to publications, an algorithm was run to assign FoRs according to the profile of a researcher's publications. Perhaps SEER could be used to distribute FoRs to researchers (noting that for researchers with no research produced over the period an additional assignment of FoRs will be required).

Q43

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of an annual data collection.

Respondent skipped this question**Q44**

In future ERA rounds, should the volume of outputs submitted for each unit of evaluation be published?

Yes,

Please explain your answer.:

As noted earlier, it's important to know how much research is being produced within a UoE when taking into account the unit's rating.

Q45

In future ERA rounds, research outputs should be published with their assignment to specific disciplines following completion of the round.

Neither agree nor disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

It is unclear what the value in this data being released is. Just because data is available doesn't mean it is necessarily useful. Most of the metadata is available via other sources. It is unclear if the general public or industry gain any benefit from this data. The only really interesting thing to discover with the data is to see how different universities are coding the same papers. There are legitimate reasons for choosing one FoR over another, for example, to ensure minimum thresholds are met. Also, for journal articles in journals with only 2-digit FoRs assigned, individual choice plays a part.

Q46

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of publishing research outputs with their assignment to specific disciplines?

Advantages

Working out the level of collaboration among Australian institutions; figuring out how different institutions code the same paper.

Disadvantages

Not sure this is worth the effort required. What's the value?

Q47

What other data do you think the ARC should publish following an ERA round? (Note - in ERA 2018 metadata included: Research output title, Research output type, reference year, outlet, publisher, ISBN, ERA round, and Institution)

The value of publishing this data is unclear. But as an analyst, I'd like the DOI provided. I'd be interested in finding out 1) how much output without a by-line is submitted by each institution and 2) How much by-lined output is missing from each institution. There's probably a research article in that analysis.

Q48

Considering that EI is a new assessment, to what extent is EI meeting its objectives to:

encourage greater collaboration between universities and research end-users, such as industry, by assessing engagement and impact?

Comment:

A small amount

Due to the retrospective nature of EI, I am not sure how much it has driven new collaborations. The fact that it is so case study driven also means exposure to the exercise is limited. I assume some researchers who have been involved are thinking of new projects that they could potentially turn into case studies.

provide clarity to the Government and the Australian public about how their investments in university research translate into tangible benefits beyond academia?

Comment:

A small amount

Case studies won't provide the Government with anything other than a handful of examples. This exercise doesn't provide a real view of collaboration/ engagement with industry

identify institutional processes and infrastructure that enable research engagement?

Comment:

Not at all

An external exercise isn't required to determine these processes and infrastructure.

promote greater support for the translation of research impact within institutions for the benefit of Australia beyond academia?

Comment:

A small amount

It has perhaps led institutions to think about better support pathways, but I think this is a one-off benefit and would not be served by ongoing E&I exercises in the current form.

identify the ways in which institutions currently translate research into impact?

Comment:

A small amount

The case studies approach really provides a narrow view of the translation of research into impact

Page 12: EI Policy /2

Q49

The EI objectives are appropriate for the future needs of its stakeholders.

Neither agree nor disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

I don't have a problem with the objectives per say, I just don't believe the exercise meets those objectives. The use of cases studies doesn't provide an overall view to the Government and the Australian public about how their investments in university research translate into tangible benefits beyond academia. It's at best an exercise that provides highlights, nice little stories that can be used by the Government and universities.

Q50

What impact has EI had on:

the Australian university research sector as a whole
Individual Universities
Researchers
Other sectors outside of academia?

More focus on E&I. Impost of the exercise.

More focus on E&I. Impost of the exercise.

More focus on E&I. Impost of the exercise.

Impost on industry in having to provide materials and commentary for the submission.

Q51

How do you, or your organisation, use EI outcomes?

I left my institution before the release of the results, but I am not sure institutions gain much in terms of the ratings provided other than an initial analysis of the results.

That said, the collection of case studies allows for the development of promotional material to use in attracting business partners or in fundraising and recognition raising (including HDR recruitment). Basically, the E&I assessment process wasn't of much use. However, the submission material had other positive uses.

Q52

The EI outcomes are valuable to you or your organisation.

Disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

I am not convinced institutions get anything out of the outcomes in terms of the rating providing. I'd argue that there was a one-off benefit in thinking about how universities supports E&I, what we could do in the future, and in hunting for case studies gaining a better understanding of E&I taking place or that had taken place in the past (possibly, I don't think I learnt a lot I didn't already know from my own institution).

Q53

How else could EI outcomes be used?

Nice packages of research success stories that could be printed or put online for the public and industry to view.

Page 13: EI Policy /3

Q54

Respondent skipped this question

The current Engagement definition is appropriate.

Q55

Respondent skipped this question

The current Impact definition is appropriate.

Q56

Respondent skipped this question

The current end-user definition is appropriate.

Q57

Respondent skipped this question

Are there any end-user categories excluded in the current definition of research end-user that you think should be included? Please explain your answer.

Q58

Respondent skipped this question

Are there other key terms that need to be formally defined?

Page 14: EI Methodology /1

Q59

Respondent skipped this question

Are the two-digit Field of Research codes the most appropriate method to define units of assessment for Engagement and Impact?

Q60

Respondent skipped this question

Are there other ways to classify units of assessment in EI, for example SEO codes?

Q61

Respondent skipped this question

Should there be more or fewer units of assessment per university?

Q62

Respondent skipped this question

The EI low-volume threshold should continue to be based on the number of research outputs submitted for ERA.

Q63

Respondent skipped this question

If you disagree, how should eligibility for assessment in EI be determined?

Q64

Respondent skipped this question

The low-volume threshold is set at the appropriate level.

Page 15: EI Methodology /2

Q65

Respondent skipped this question

Overall, the engagement indicator suite for the assessment of research engagement is suitable.

Q66

Respondent skipped this question

The cash support from research end-users using HERDC data is appropriate for the assessment of research engagement.

Q67

Respondent skipped this question

The research commercialisation income is appropriate for the assessment of research engagement.

Q68

Respondent skipped this question

Are there additional metrics that would be appropriate across many or all disciplines?

Q69

Respondent skipped this question

Are there alternative metrics that would be appropriate across many or all disciplines?

Q70

Respondent skipped this question

Should any of the current engagement metrics be redesigned?

Q71

Respondent skipped this question

The co-supervision of HDR students should be made an engagement indicator in future rounds of EI.

Q72

In your opinion, are any of the ERA applied measures appropriate indicators of research engagement in EI?

Patents	Yes
Research commercialisation income	Yes
Registered designs	Yes
Plant breeder's rights	Yes
NHMRC endorsed guidelines	Yes

Page 16: EI Methodology /3

Q73

Respondent skipped this question

The narrative approach is suitable for describing and assessing research engagement with end-users.

Q74

Respondent skipped this question

If you disagree with the narrative approach, what alternative approach could be used to replace the narrative? If you are suggesting indicators, please be specific.

Q75

Respondent skipped this question

One engagement submission per broad discipline is sufficient for capturing the research engagement within that discipline.

Q76

Respondent skipped this question

The engagement narrative needs to be longer.

Q77

Respondent skipped this question

Additional evidence is needed within the narrative.

Page 17: EI Methodology /4

Q78

Respondent skipped this question

The narrative approach is suitable for describing and assessing Impact.

Q79

Respondent skipped this question

If you disagree with the narrative approach, what alternative approach could be used to replace the narrative? Please explain your answer. If you are suggesting indicators, please be specific.

Q80

Respondent skipped this question

One impact study per broad discipline is sufficient for capturing the research impact within that discipline.

Q81

Respondent skipped this question

The impact narrative needs to be longer.

Q82

Respondent skipped this question

There is need for additional evidence to be provided within the impact narrative.

Q83

Respondent skipped this question

In your opinion, are there quantitative indicators that could be used to measure the impact of research outside of academia?

Q84

Respondent skipped this question

If you answered 'yes' to the previous question, please name and describe the quantitative indicator/s, and the disciplines for which they are relevant.

Page 18: EI Methodology /5

Q85

Respondent skipped this question

The narrative approach is suitable for describing and assessing approach to impact.

Q86

Respondent skipped this question

If you disagree with the narrative approach, what alternative approach could be used to replace the narrative? Please explain your answer. If you are suggesting indicators, please be specific.

Q87

Respondent skipped this question

One approach to impact narrative per broad discipline is sufficient for capturing the activities within that discipline.

Q88

Respondent skipped this question

The approach to impact narrative needs to be longer.

Q89

Respondent skipped this question

There is a need for additional evidence to be provided.

Q90

Respondent skipped this question

Would there be benefit in combining engagement and approach to impact?

Page 19: EI Methodology /6

Q91

Respondent skipped this question

The engagement rating scale is suitable for assessing research engagement.

Q92

Respondent skipped this question

The descriptors for the engagement rating scale are suitable.

Q93

Respondent skipped this question

The impact rating scale is suitable for assessing impact.

Q94

Respondent skipped this question

The descriptors for the impact rating scale are suitable.

Q95

Respondent skipped this question

The approach to impact rating scale is suitable for assessing approach to impact.

Q96

Respondent skipped this question

The descriptions for the approach to impact rating scale are suitable.

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Q97

Respondent skipped this question

Should EI continue to include an interdisciplinary impact study in addition to the two-digit Field of Research impact studies?

Q98

Respondent skipped this question

Should the EI low volume threshold be applied to the unit of assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research in EI 2024 with the option to opt in if threshold is not met?

Q99

Respondent skipped this question

Should the unit of assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander research include engagement in the next round of EI?

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Q100

How often should ERA occur?

Other (please specify and explain your answer).:

Five years allows enough staff movement and evolution in research focus to give be able to chart how the research profile of the country and individual institutions is changing.

Q101

What impact would a longer assessment cycle (i.e. greater than three years) have on the value of ERA results, particularly in the intervening years?

See above

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Q102

Every five years

How often should the EI assessment occur?

Q103

Respondent skipped this question

What impact would a longer assessment cycle (i.e. greater than three years) have on the value of EI results, particularly in the intervening years?

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Q104

ERA and EI should be combined into the one assessment.

Neither agree or disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

I am deeply opposed to the use of case studies for EI so it's difficult to think about how the two should be joined. The problem with EI is the lack of relevant available data. I think the easiest way to undertake EI is to hold assessment for 5 years and actually set up a proper data collection that the sector engages in annually. That data is then assessed every time there's an ERA exercise. It will take time for E&I results to start properly appearing. Eventually, we'd have robust measures.

Q105

What would be the advantages and/or disadvantages of ERA and EI being combined into the one assessment.

Advantages

Ony one exercise

Disadvantages

the exercises are very different and too much of an impost for small offices to handle at one time.

Q106

Are there other ways to streamline the processes to reduce the cost to universities of participating in ERA and EI?

No,

Please explain your answer.:

Beyond those outlined in my other answers, unless the exercises were revamped, I am not sure what other streamlining could take place.

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Q107

In your view, what data sources could ERA utilise?

ERA data sources should contract rather than expand... applied measures for example should not be part of the ERA.

Q108

In your view, what are the most time consuming elements of the ERA submission?

FoR Coding of publications and income.

Q109

Are there efficiencies that could be introduced?

Yes,

Please describe.:

Metrics providers could do this automatically (assuming no apportioning of citations takes place).

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Q110

In your view, what are the most time consuming elements of the EI submission?

Development of case studies.

Q111

Are there efficiencies that could be introduced?

Yes,

Please describe.:

Case studies should not be used and robust data sources (see Q5.4) should be used to measure E&I.

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Q112

ORCID iDs should be mandatory for ERA.

Neither agree nor disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

I'd only make ORCID IDs mandatory if the census date method rather than institutional by-line continued to be used.

Q113

What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of mandatory ORCID iDs?

Advantages

Use of ORCID IDs would make it easier for third party providers to undertake the collection and analysis of output, particularly in metrics-based fields.

Disadvantages

The disadvantage is that the process would place a lot of responsibility on individual researchers to ensure their ORCID IDs were up to date with all their publications.

Q114

The automatic harvesting of output data using ORCID IDs would streamline a university's submission process.

Neither agree nor disagree,

Please explain your answer.:

I am leaning towards agree, but there would be some teething issues in terms of getting systems to automatically draw in publications.

Q115

What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of automatic harvesting of output data using ORCID IDs?

Advantages

Advantages include the possibility of auto-harvesting publications, particularly for new staff.

Disadvantages

Wrongly entered data not matching to the correct publication in bibliometric systems such as WOS and Scopus.

Q116

DOIs should be mandatory for ERA.

Agree,

Please explain your answer.:

As an analyst I agree that where a DOI exists it should be provided in the ERA (see Q3.38), but I am not sure what use it is for the ERA itself. NOTE: I am assuming this question doesn't actually limit the submission to only publications with a DOI.

Q117

What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of mandatory DOIs?

Advantages

I don't think it's particularly arduous to harvest the DOI for indexed publications.

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Q118

Are there other ways to collect data to reduce the cost and burden to universities of participating in ERA and EI whilst maintaining the robustness of the ERA and EI process?

Yes,

Please explain your answer.:

Yes, metrics providers could actually use by-lines for institutions to carry out the publication collection and analysis for metrics-based fields. It is possible that ARC and NHMRC grant data could be used to have a more focused research income analysis (maybe Cat 1 for ERA and all other categories for ERA E&I).

Q119

What are the advantages and/or disadvantages?

Advantages

Loss of institutional control over every aspect of the submission (still not sure if this would be good or bad).

Page 28: Additional Comments

Q120

Respondent skipped this question

Please provide any additional comments:
