VU Research Fellowship 2019 Guidelines for Progress Reporting

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Part A INTRODUCTION

A1.1 Overview

A1.1.1 *VU Research* leads, supports, manages and administers all the strategically aligned research and research training activity of the University. *VU Research* is responsible for allocating and ensuring responsible use of resources used to conduct research and research training, including the provision of resources for research to College based academic staff.

A1.1.2 In 2019, *VU Research* allocated Research Fellowships to College Academic staff to undertake duties relating to research under the direction and control of *VU Research* as a shared resource between *VU Research* and the relevant Higher Education College. Two types of Fellowships to undertake research were provided:

    a. **Research Fellowship (Priority):** For research and research training proposed to be undertaken under the Priority FoR codes and contributing to the University's Areas of Research Focus.

    b. **Research Fellowship (Accreditation):** For research and research training proposed to be undertaken under Accreditation FoR codes and contributing to the University's Areas of Research Focus.

A1.1.3 2019 VU Research Fellowship holders were supported to roll over their Fellowship into 2020. The initial roll-over of a Fellowship was conditional upon progress for the period 1 January 2019 to 31 March 2020 being reported.

A1.1.4 Progress Reports must address each of the requirements specified in the Report Form. Additional information to supplement the Progress Report may be requested.

A1.1.5 Progress over the period will be reviewed and if deemed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor Research, on the recommendation of the Assessment Panel, to be unsatisfactory the 2020 VU Research Fellowship allocation will be withdrawn or reduced from 1 July 2020.

A1.2 Objectives

A1.2.1 These Guidelines have been prepared to assist 2019 VU Research Fellowship holders who have rolled over their Fellowship into 2020 to understand the process and requirements for reporting on progress.

A1.2.2 These Guidelines apply only to Priority and Accreditation Fellowships and not to. Research Training Supervision Only Fellowships.

Part B PROGRESS REPORT REQUIREMENTS

B1.1.1 Progress reports must be completed using the relevant form on Smarty Grants.

B1.1.2 Failure to submit a Progress report by the due date will normally result in the withdrawal of the 2020 VU Research Fellowship.

B1.1.3 Progress Reports must contain all the information necessary for assessment without the need for further written or oral explanation, or reference to additional documentation. The University may request additional information but is not obliged to do so.

B1.1.4   Academics will be asked to submit their Progress Report via the online application system by the nominated closing date, unless otherwise advised by *VU Research*. Submission of the report is treated as confirmation that the information contained is accurate and supported by the applicant.

Part C PROGRESS EVALUATION CRITERIA

C1.1.1   Progress Reports will be evaluated by a Panel using the following Criteria:

C1.1.2   **Improvement of Research Track Record and Capacity (40%)**

a. Improvement or progress towards improving an individual's research performance as measured by:

   i.   Research Output and Publications;

   ii. External Research Income received or secured, or Applications for external funding;

C1.1.3   **Mentoring and capacity building (10%)**

a. Contributions have been made to building the research capacity and capabilities of *VU Research* as demonstrated by the following:

   i.   contribution to expanding VU's research capability in the Areas of Research Focus and Priority and Accreditation Fields of Research;

   ii. commitment to creating research capacity, collaboration and innovation within the Research Flagships of *VU Research*;

   iii. contribution to building and/or maintaining a research environment suitable for research students and early career researchers ;that enables high quality research and research training.

   iv. Supervision of HDR students and mentoring of other researchers, particularly, early and mid-career researchers.

   v.   evidence of effort to attract financial resources to enhance and support research capacity within *VU Research*.

C1.1.4   **Alignment, Quality and Innovation of Research (30%)**

a. There is evidence that the research is making progress towards:

   i.   producing new knowledge or innovation;

   ii. contributing to the University's reputation in the Areas of Research Focus and Priority and Accreditation Fields of Research;

   iii. contributing to research quality and reputation in the University's Priority FoRs or Accreditation FoRs;

   iv. enhancing the quality of teaching and learning at VU, and in particular in the academic's College.

C1.1.5   **Benefit (20%)**

a. The research has or is likely to produce significant economic, commercial, environmental, social and/or cultural benefit that are aligned with the VU Research Plan 2017-2020;

b. The research has or is likely to produce engagement and/or a sustained benefit for industry, community and government;

c. The Research has been funded or effort has been made to secure funding from external sources.

Part D IMPORTANT DATES

D1.1.1   Progress Reports must be submitted via the online application system (SmartyGrants) by **22 April 2020**.

D1.1.2   The outcome of the progress evaluation will be notified to VU Research Fellows by **1 June 2020**.

Part E ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS

E1.1.1   *VU Research* through Research Services will manage the assessment and notification process of all Research Fellowship Progress Reports.

E1.2   Assessment Panels Convened

E1.2.1   The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) will convene a panel or panels and will endeavour to achieve a membership that:

a. has a balanced gender representation;

b. comprises College and *VU Research* representatives;

c. has appropriate disciplinary representation; and

d. only involves academics and/or professional staff with relevant training and experience.

E1.2.2   It is expected that an Assessment Panel will include the following members:

a. The Executive Director of the Flagship Research Institutes or delegate;

b. Two leadership representatives from the Research Institutes;

c. A College Dean representative;

d. A researcher representative.

E1.3   Assessment against Criteria

E1.3.1   The Assessment Panel will assess progress reports using the Selection Criteria in order to make a determination of whether satisfactory progress has been made.

E1.4   Panel Recommendations

E1.4.1   For each VU Research Fellowship, the Assessment Panel will make a recommendation to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) as to whether progress is:

a. Satisfactory or

b. Unsatisfactory.

E1.4.2   In the case of a recommendation of unsatisfactory progress, the Assessment Panel will be required to provide the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) with a justification for the recommendation of unsatisfactory progress.

Part F RECOMMENDATIONS AND OUTCOMES

F1.1.1   Following receipt of the Panel's recommendations, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) will be required to:

    a. review the recommendations of the Assessment Panel;

    b. request further information if required.

F1.1.2   The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) will make the final determination whether progress has been satisfactory or unsatisfactory. The outcome of the recommendations will:

    a. result in confirmation of the Fellowship for the remainder of 2020 where progress has been deemed satisfactory;

    b. result in the withdrawal or reduction of the VU Research Fellowship and the research allocation from 1 July 2020 in the case of unsatisfactory progress.

F1.1.3   The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) will advise the College Dean of the outcome.

F1.1.4   Once College Deans have been notified, Research Services will notify all applicants of the outcome of their Progress Report.

F1.2 Appeals Process

F1.2.1   Academics who submit a Progress Report that results in an unsatisfactory recommendation are able to submit an appeal against administrative process issues. The appeals process is designed to ensure that the Progress Report has been assessed in accordance with the procedures outlined in these Guidelines.

F1.2.2   Appeals will be considered only against administrative process issues and not against Panel recommendations, decisions, assessor or Flagship Panel member comments. To lodge an appeal against administrative process issues, the academic must identify the specific part of these Guidelines which they believe has been incorrectly applied.

F1.2.3   Appeals must be submitted by the academic within 14 days of the date of the notification to the academic of the outcome. If an academic is on leave for the majority of the 14 day period following the notification of outcome, they will be entitled to request an extension to the appeal due date. An appeal cannot be lodged against an appeal outcome.

F1.2.4   The Appeals Process is managed through the Office of the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor in accordance with the guidelines.

F1.2.5   Appeals must be submitted to *VU Research* electronically to research.fellowships@vu.edu.au.

F1.2.6   The decision to uphold or reject an appeal rests solely with the University. In the case of an appeal that is upheld, the application will be referred back to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) for reconsideration.

Part G POINTS OF CONTACT

G1.1.1   Academics should contact the Research Services office at research.fellowships@vu.edu.au if they have any queries regarding the process or how to complete the Progress Report.

APPENDIX 1: DEFINITIONS

Accreditation FoR Codes means the FoR Codes identified and defined by the University as eligible for access to human, physical or financial resources for research where it is necessary for course accreditation purposes.

Areas of Research Focus means the areas of research focus outlined in the *VU Research Plan 2017-2020*, namely
1. *Supporting Industry Growth and Response to Change*
2. *Building Resilient, Inclusive and Creative Communities*
3. *Enabling Healthy and Active Populations*
4. *Promoting High Performance in Sport*
5. *Creating Effective Teaching and Learning for Diverse Populations*
6. *Enhancing the Evidence Base for Public Policy*

Dean means the Dean of the academic's College, including their delegates or nominees.

Early Career Researcher (ECR) means an academic whose research higher degree qualification (or equivalent) has been conferred on or after the 1 October 2014.

Field of Research (FoR) means the [Australian and New Zealand Standard Research Classifications](#) which classify research according to the research undertaken, rather than the purpose of the activity. It describes what is being researched. The FoR is a hierarchical classification with three levels, namely Divisions (2 digits), Groups (4 digits) and Fields (6 digits). Each level is identified by a unique number.

Panel means the group of experts appointed by the Deputy-Vice Chancellor and Senior Vice-President to assess Progress Reports and to provide a recommendation for the allocation of resources to support research under a Research Fellowship to the Vice-President Research.

Collaborative Research means a particular Research project which involves multiple (internal or external) researchers and may be interdisciplinary.

Priority FoR Codes means the FoR Codes which the University has strategically identified to invest and redirect the human, physical and financial resources to support the University's vision and defined Areas of Research Focus.

Research means 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, understandings, inventions and applications of this knowledge. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it leads to new and creative outcomes. This definition of research encompasses pure and strategic basic research, applied research and experimental development.
(1) This definition of research is consistent with a broad notion of research and experimental development, including creative work undertaken on a systematic basis in order to increase the stock of knowledge, such as knowledge of humanity, culture and society, and the use of this stock of knowledge to devise new applications.
(2) Activities that do not satisfy the definition of research include:
(a) scientific and technical information services;

(b) general purpose or routine data collection;

(c) standardization and routine testing;

(d) feasibility studies (except into research and experimental development projects);

(e) specialized routine medical care;

(f) commercial, legal and administrative aspects of patenting, copyright or licensing activities; and

(g) routine computer programming, systems work or software maintenance.

Research Allocation is the total FTE allocation that is provided for an academic to undertake University supported research. The Research Allocation total includes the:

- Base Research Allocation,
- Any allocation provided as Bridging Support,
- Any externally funded FTE.

Research Fellowship means a Research Application approved, varied or partially approved by the Vice-President Research to receive a research allocation in the form of an FTE allocation from *VU Research,* for the academic to undertake a research or research supervision within *VU Research*.

Research Flagships Means the two overarching conceptual branches of *VU Research,* under which the following research centres and institutes will deliver research programs:

(1) Research Flagship: *Sustainable Industries and Liveable Cities*

 (a) Institute of Sustainable Industries and Liveable Cities
 (b) Centre of Policy Studies (COPS)
 (c) Centre for International Research in Education Systems (CIRES)

(2) Research Flagship: *Sport, Health and Active Living*

 (a) Institute for Health and Sport.

Research Output and Publications as defined in the MORA Policy, meaning Research output that meets the definition of research and has been published or made publicly available within the reference period, submitted and/or claimed in VU Elements and accepted for the University's annual research publication collection, including recognised Creative Works as Research.

Research Training is defined as a formal course of postgraduate study that leads to the acquisition of advanced skills, techniques and knowledge in the conduct of research, and requires the production of a substantial original research output, such as a thesis and 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 Note)

VU Elements means the research information management system that provides a single source for all of the University's research publication data.

APPENDIX 2: AREAS OF RESEARCH FOCUS

The University has identified six **Areas of Research Focus** in the **VU Research Plan 2017-2020**:

1. *Supporting Industry Growth and Response to Change*

   Goal: To provide key partner industries with the required systems, policies, practices and technologies to effectively respond to constantly changing political, economic, social and technological landscapes.

2. *Building Resilient, Inclusive and Creative Communities*

   Goal: To work with key community and government partners to explore the complex relationships between diverse people and communities, built infrastructure and natural environments and identify practical policies and evidence-based interventions to build more resilient and inclusive communities.

3. *Enabling Healthy and Active Populations*

   Goal: To develop evidence-based interventions, policies, practices, and technologies to promote positive population health outcomes using integrated, multidisciplinary approaches.

4. *Promoting High Performance in Sport*

   Goal: To enhance high performance in sport by advancing and translating our understanding of bio-physical and psycho-social processes and theories to improve sport systems, policies and practices.

5. *Effective Teaching and Learning for Diverse Populations*

   Goal: To identify, validate and implement effective teaching and learning systems, policies and practices which empower individuals from diverse backgrounds to achieve success throughout their life.

6. *Enhancing the Evidence Base for Public Policy*

   Goal: To develop and apply advanced methods for the provision of evidence-based analysis of the full ramifications of public policy alternatives in order to achieve the best outcomes in the face of constantly changing economic, political, physical and social environments.

APPENDIX 3: FIELDS OF RESEARCH

The University has strategically selected discipline areas and prioritised 4-digit Fields of Research (**FoR**) codes which support research in the Areas of Research Focus and/or are required by accreditation bodies for course accreditation purposes.

Priority FoR Codes

The Priority FoR codes identified by the University for 2020 are:

0102	Applied Mathematics	1111	Nutrition and Dietetics
0601	Biochemistry and Cell Biology	1116	Medical Physiology
0602	Ecology	1117	Public Health and Health Services
0801	Artificial Intelligence and Image Processing	1301	Education Systems
0805	Distributed Computing	1302	Curriculum and Pedagogy
0806	Information Systems	1303	Specialist Studies In Education
0904	Chemical Engineering	1402	Applied Economics
0905	Civil Engineering	1503	Business and Management
0906	Electrical and Electronic Engineering	1506	Tourism
0908	Food Sciences	1605	Policy and Administration
0913	Mechanical Engineering	1608	Sociology
1103	Clinical Studies	1701	Psychology
1106	Human Movement and Sports Science	2002	Cultural Studies
1110	Nursing	2103	Historical Studies

The University will regularly review and evaluate the performance of the Priority FoR Codes (at least every two years) to ensure alignment with the University's disciplinary expertise, strategic direction and Areas of Research Focus, within the budgetary setting. These reviews may result in adjustments to the Priority FoR Codes.

Accreditation FoR Codes

The Accreditation FoR codes identified by the University for 2020 are:

1501	Accounting, Auditing and Accountability
1607	Social Work
1801	Law

It is anticipated that Accreditation FoRs will be reviewed annually and will be subject to change. The accreditation requirements of a course alone will not result in Accreditation FoR Code status. The University will determine whether Accreditation FoR Code status is appropriate by evaluating:

- course viability, inclusive of the cost of any additional research requirements linked to course accreditation
- the particular FoR Codes' sustained research performance
- the accreditation requirements of the relevant accrediting body with respect to research
- course alignment with the *VU Research* Strategic Plan 2017-2020 and the Areas of Research Focus of the University
- the University's research budget

In addition to the University's expectations and requirements in relation to research, all research and research training undertaken under an Accreditation FoR Code must strictly adhered to the requirements and expectations of the relevant accreditation body.