Research strategy for GSSS&P
2011-2015
Recent changes to university system and research funding

- Funds for activity (teaching and research) not institutions
- Increase in student/staff ratios
- Increasing performance measurement especially
  - teaching quality
  - research growth and quality
- Proportion of university operating grants transferred to Research councils and their research grant programs
- Research funding changes:
  - Greater user involvement
  - University-industry partnerships
  - Interdisciplinary research emphasis
  - Greater variety of funding sources
Why is research important?

• We make ourselves useful to society
• This is what universities are supposed to do: 20% of academic salaries is allocated to research
• Research among all staff is good for informing up-to-date teaching
• Research grants and outputs are among the most significant measures of esteem and university ranking
• Better university esteem and ranking attract better staff and better qualified local and international students
• More research outputs and income bring in greater government research subsidies and places for HDR students, thus making research more feasible
RMIT and research development

• RMIT established 1887 as technical college
• University status 1992
• Increased focus on research has included
  – Upgrading staff qualifications
  – PhD and coursework masters programs
  – Research centres and groups
  – Investing in research only staff
  – Emphasis on research income, publications and timely HDR completions
  – Attempts to increase research status with ARC grant funding
  – Establishing research policy/program infrastructure
  – Off-the-top investment
Research Investment Funds (RIF)

- Since 2007, RMIT spent around $30 million in RIF
- Most funding to Research Institutes
  - Director, Manager, administrative support, Institute programs.
  - Program funding: academic salaries, travel, consultancies, marketing and events
- A smaller amount of RIF funding has been used to support a range of internal schemes, such as Career Interruption Fellowships, Emerging Researcher Grants, Research Leave Awards and the Vice-Chancellors Research Fellowships
- RMIT did not achieve the marked improvement in research performance in line with the aspirations set out in the Research & Innovation Strategy 2005-2009
## RMIT research performance 2005-2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Research Income</th>
<th>Australian Competitive Grant Income</th>
<th>No. of Weighted Publications</th>
<th>No. of HDR Completions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>$23,589,569</td>
<td>$6,776,650</td>
<td>1080.16</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>$27,599,036</td>
<td>$7,531,390</td>
<td>1176.05</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>$26,486,513</td>
<td>$8,276,634</td>
<td>1204.9</td>
<td>261</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>$28,350,890</td>
<td>$9,311,529</td>
<td>1271.65</td>
<td>274</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>$31,562,622</td>
<td>$10,145,116</td>
<td>1280.09</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RMIT research performance

• measured in terms of:
  – Research income
  – Competitive research income
  – Weighted publications
  – HDR completions
  – Research active staff

• Resulted in funding to RMIT in 2010
  – RIBG $1.7m
  – JRE $5.4m
  – SRE $0.9m
  – APA $3.0m
  – RTS $15m
Definition of terms 1:

- HERDC: Higher Education Research Data Collection. Comprises research income and research publications data submitted by universities each year. The data collected is used, along with data from the Higher Education Student Data Collection, for determining allocations to universities for Commercialisation Training Scheme (CTS), Research Training Scheme (RTS), Australian Postgraduate Awards (APA), International Postgraduate Research Scholarships (IPRS), Research Infrastructure Block Grants Scheme (RIGB), Joint Research Engagement (JRE) scheme, and the Sustainable Research Excellence (SRE) program.

- RIGB: Research Infrastructure Block Grant - funding to support infrastructure costs associated with DEEWR Category 1 research income. Can only be spent on research infrastructure.

- Category 1 research income – from nationally competitive grants. ARC are the most common ones, but there are 20 or so other Commonwealth schemes, and equal number of non-Commonwealth schemes. See Australian Competitive Grants Register (ACGR), http://www.innovation.gov.au/Section/Research/Pages/AustralianCompetitiveGrantsRegister%28ACGR%29.aspx

RMIT receives $0.57 cents per $1.00 of category 1 research income as RIGB
Definition of terms 2:

– Category 2: Other Public Sector Research Income; Category 3: Industry and Other Research Income

– University receives $0.34 per $1.00 of category 2 and 3 grant revenue as part of JRE

– JRE: Joint Research Engagement funding is designed to reward greater collaboration between universities and research end-users, and can be used to fund any activity related to research. It is calculated to reflect 60% of category 2, 3 and 4 research income, 30% of HDR load and 10% research publications output

• SRE: Sustainable Research Excellence: supplementary government allocation designed to address the gap in funding for the indirect costs of university research. The grants are calculated from Australian Competitive Grant Income (Category 1) income, and also depend on proportion of research active staff and on publications.
Definition of terms 3:

• CRN: Collaborative Research Networks program is designed to support smaller and/or less research intensive universities to build on their research strengths through partnerships with other universities.

• Research Investment Funds (RIF) RMIT fund for supporting research initiatives

• PREQ: Postgraduate Research Experience Questionnaire. A national survey of all students who complete their research degree. It gathers data on students' perceptions of the quality and frequency of supervision, intellectual and social climate, infrastructure, approaches to research, quality of thesis examination, and generic skills development in their research higher degree.

• DEEWR: Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
RMIT research performance evaluation

- RMIT has fallen far behind a number of comparable institutions within Australia that have experienced substantial growth in total research income.

- Curtin University and Queensland University of Technology both started at $36 million in 2005 and had grown by to $64 million and $80 million respectively by 2009.

- In 2009 research income per FTE was over $48000 at Curtin, $52000 at QUT and only $24000 at RMIT.

- RMIT leads the ATN in the number of HDR completions

- PREQ scores are well below the national average

- In 2009, RMIT’s Overall Satisfaction was 74.6% while the national average was 84.3%.

- RMIT HERDC publications have remained fairly stable over the 2005-2009 period; in the same time period, Curtin’s publications increased by 83%
DSC College – total research income

DSC schools total research income

- Arch and Des
- GSSSP
- Art Total
- Creative Media
- Fashion and Textiles
- Appl Com
- PCPM
- Education

© RMIT University 2009
DSC College – ARC research income

ARC research income

2002 2003 2004 2005 2006 2007 2008 2009 Budget

A&D GSSSP Art Creative Media App Com PCPM Education CfD DSC Total
Income earning by level

DSC College research income earners by level (2007-09)

- Proportion earning income at all levels is too low
  - DSC overall 21 per-cent with income earning record
  - Proportion earning does increase by level
Income earning by school

- Income earning varies by school
- Options for increasing income earning
  - Same people earning more
  - Increase number earning
  - Replace with new staff with income track record
School results in last ARC round:

Discovery:
19 initial interest (started process but did not end up submitting a proposal)
12 submitted

1 successful: Sara Charlesworth; "From margins to mainstream: gender equality and employment regulation", to run from 2011 to 2015.

Linkage, Round 1:
1 submitted
0 successful

Linkage grants administered through other universities

- Paul Mees secured two linkage grants, one with a colleague from Curtin university on "Spatial network analysis for multimodal urban transport systems", and the other with two colleagues from Swinburne on "New paradigms for urban transport planning in Australia".

- Carmel Laragy secured a linkage grant with colleagues from LaTrobe and from Melbourne on “Transforming the experiences of ageing: The ABC of building socially inclusive communities”
RMIT Research & Innovation Plan 2011-2015

• RMIT Target for 2015 - $80 million in research income – 2.5 times increase on 2010

• GSSS&P target for 2011 – 4.6 million, up from 4 million which we are not likely to meet

• “RIF will be used to support the employment of excellent researchers, proposed jointly by an Institute Director and a Head of School, for a period of four years. During this four year period, as continuing positions are freed up within the School by normal staff turnover, RIF funded academics may be appointed to vacant positions. Others may be funded by external grants and a limited number may seek alternative employment with another Institution. The aim of the strategy is to ultimately embed as many of these excellent researchers as possible into the normal academic life of the Schools in which they are employed”.
New DSC initiatives:

– Research performance assessment in workload planning
– Expand grant writing assistance
– Establish College ECR network
– Improve teaching efficiency to free up time
– Further align HDRs to research focus
– Support for increasing HDR publishing
– Reward research achievements in DSC
– Review school research support arrangements
– Further review recruitment against research criteria
Lessons learnt from ERA

1. Quality of academic staff is important

   Recruitment of staff should be based on research record – quality of publications (not just quantity) and success with grant income.

   It is essential that academic staff are involved in high quality research and high quality teaching. Many Teaching and Research staff did not have outputs for ERA, but had to be counted.

2. RMIT affiliation is important

   Show ‘RMIT University’ in the byline [the line at the head of a journal article carrying the writer's name] when publishing. Outputs from staff with adjunct or fractional appointments could be included in our total if there was a ‘publication association’ with RMIT- in a byline or elsewhere on or in the body of work.

*
Lessons learnt from ERA (continued)

3. **Schools should develop specific publication strategies to ensure their research appears in high quality outlets**

   **Place greater emphasis on high quality refereed journals than conference papers**
   
   There is a sector wide shift from conference papers to journal articles
   
   It can be difficult to verify if conference papers have been peer reviewed.
   
   Only peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers are eligible for ERA.
   
   Citation analysis was only conducted on journal articles

   **When selecting a journal to publish in, draw on expertise, citation data, impact factors and other information.**
   
   Do not base your decision solely on the ‘rankings’ provided by the ARC. There is not a uniform distribution of A* and A journals across disciplines and they were for ERA purposes only. These may change for the next ERA.
   
   Here is a link to the current ERA ranked journal list: [http://www.arc.gov.au/era/era_journal_list.htm](http://www.arc.gov.au/era/era_journal_list.htm)
Lessons learnt from ERA (continued)

3. (Cont.) Schools should develop specific publication strategies to ensure their research appears in high quality outlets

Use quality of the outlet to determine where to publish not the ‘right’ FOR

The FoR coding was specific to the ARC and ERA 2010. The next ERA assessment may have different parameters. About 80% of journals had their FoR code predetermined by codes assigned by the ARC.

How to tell a quality journal? Many international journals include a measure of their impact factor [IF]. In a given year, the impact factor of a journal is calculated by dividing the number of current year citations to the source items published in that journal during the previous two years. It is frequently used as a proxy for the relative importance of a journal within its field, with journals with higher impact factors deemed to be more important than those with lower ones. Impact factors are calculated yearly for those journals that are indexed in Thomson Reuter's Journal Citation Reports.
The four key areas reported on in the ERA exercise provide a description of ‘school research strengths’ for strategic research planning purposes:

- 1205 (Urban & regional Planning): 81 publications [70.4% of RMIT total]
- 1605 (Policy & Administration): 102 publications [67.7% of RMIT total]
- 1606 (Political Science): 118 publications [79.2% of RMIT total]
- 1608 (Sociology): 86 publications [70.8% of RMIT total]
- 1607 (Social Work): 57 publications [75% of RMIT total]

+ one of the highest contributions (50.8 publications in all) to 3 different sub areas of education, in which RMIT as a whole has a substantial strength:

- 1301 (Education systems)
- 1302 (Curriculum and pedagogy)
- 1303 Specialist Studies in Education)
Minor ERA contributions:

• 1402, ‘Applied economics: GSSS&P contributed 24.5 publications or 17.9% of total of 137, second highest at RMIT
• 1801 (Law & Legal Studies), GSSS&P contributed 14.5 publications, or 13.7% of the RMIT total of 106 publications.
• Among areas in which we teach and/or research but in which we have very low publications strength are:
  • 1602 (Criminology) 4 publications
  • 1701 (Psychology) 4 publications
  • 2003 (Language Studies) no publications
  • 2103 (Historical Studies) 4 publications
  • 2201 (Applied Ethics) 0 publications
  • 2203 (Philosophy) 1 publication
  • 2204 (Religion & Religious Studies) 2 publications
## GSSS&P publications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools by 4-digit FoR distribution</th>
<th>Books</th>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Conference Papers</th>
<th>Creative Works</th>
<th>Journal Articles</th>
<th>Grand Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Global Studies, Social Science and Planning</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1806 Political Science</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>33.0</td>
<td>118.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1805 Policy and Administration</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td>102.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1808 Sociology</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>22.0</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>85.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1205 Urban and Regional Planning</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>35.0</td>
<td>81.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1607 Social Work</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>36.0</td>
<td>57.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1402 Applied Economics</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1301 Education Systems</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 Cultural Studies</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1303 Specialist Studies In Education</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1201 Architecture</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1302 Curriculum and Pedagogy</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1801 Law</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1117 Public Health and Health Services</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1503 Business and Management</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1604 Human Geography</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0902 Environmental Science and Management</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1603 Demography</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0602 Ecology</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1699 Other Studies in Human Society</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0906 Information Systems</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2202 History and Philosophy Of Specific Fields</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2103 Historical Studies</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1602 Criminology</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 Linguistics</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1701 Psychology</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0909 Geomatic Engineering</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0907 Library and Information Studies</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 Literary Studies</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2204 Religion and Religious Studies</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1506 Tourism</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1202 Building</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Strategic school research strengths?

- Global Studies and International Development
- Urban Planning, Sustainability and Environmental Policy
- Social and Community Services and Policy
- Political Theory, Social Theory, and Social Change

We are thus a school of *Political, Sociological, Policy and Urban Studies* in ERA research terms.

- With particular reference to specific areas such as housing and homelessness, employment and equal opportunity, social program evaluation, urban infrastructure and planning, environmental governance, theories of globalisation …
GSSS&P Research strategy for 2011-2015

Key goals to achieve by 2015

• Strengthen links between teaching and research
• Make teaching models and loads more compatible with research
• Increase the proportion of research active academic staff (RMIT definition) in the school to 80% (in 2009, it was 42%)
• Increase the school HERDC Publications Score to 250 (it was 159 in 2005, 114 in 2009)
• Increase research funding by 20% per year
• Marginally increase number of HDR students in the school and improve school PREQ scores to national average.
• Make better use of external relationships to enhance research in the school