ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING GUIDE
Version 1

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This document describes a preferred framework and approach for the practice of ES at RMIT University.

The IRCU recognises that RMIT schools/groups already engage in ES of some form although the form, scope and purpose of this activity may vary. ES activity, as a minimum, is related to the strategic planning process but it is not confined to this. ES should be viewed as an ongoing, rather than episodal, activity which enables an organisation/school/group to detect changes in its internal and external environments and respond appropriately in the short, medium and long terms.

The guide is intended to encourage and support Schools/Groups in their ES activities.
1 WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING?

Environmental scanning is the exploration phase of the strategic planning process. It is the systematic process of collecting and analysing information for the purposes of planning, forecasting, or choosing a preferred future.

The environment of an organisation consists of the conditions, circumstances and influences which affect the organisation’s ability to achieve its objectives. Broadly, an organisational environment consists of two elements – the internal and the external.

There are three phases in strategic management:

- Environmental assessment
- Strategy development
- Strategy implementation

Strategic planning combines the first two phases. In practice the three phases merge together and are conducted concurrently. Figure 1 illustrates the broad relationship between scanning and strategic management.

Environmental analysis aims to identify those issues which will inform the decision-making concerned with bridging the gap between the current situation and a desired future.
2 WHY DO WE NEED TO DO IT?

A general objective of ES is to capture, share and integrate relevant and valid knowledge about the organisation and its environment in order to facilitate informed decision-making at all levels of the organisation.

Specific objectives of Environmental Scanning may include:

- Detecting important economic, social, cultural, environmental, technological, and political trends, situations, and events
- Identifying the potential opportunities and threats for the institution implied by these trends, situations, and events
- Gaining an accurate understanding of the strengths and limitations of your organisation/faculty/school/unit
- Providing a basis for analysis of future program investments

The above objectives indicate that ES activities are often linked to strategic and business planning and these links are explored further below.

However, it is important to understand that ES has wider and more general application than the strategic planning process. It is likely that ES is routinely practiced across RMIT, although often in informal and semi-structured or unstructured ways. The example in the following box points to one such instance at RMIT.

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**ES is a generic tool – it may be applied by RMIT schools/groups when making a business case for whatever purpose including program development and renewal, organisational restructuring, workforce changes, entry into partnership arrangements with other institutions or industry, new academic or research programs and new infrastructure. ES assists sub-units to assemble evidentiary data in support of their business case.**

**Example**

_The School of Creative Media business case for the introduction of new Multimedia (MM) programs._

Creative Media approached IRCU to conduct an analysis of demand and graduate outcomes that would assist the School in making a business decision about new programs.

IRCU conducted research in three areas: student demand for MM programs nationally, trends and developments in MM programs in Australian institutions and career and employment outcomes for MM graduates:

- Student demand was measured in terms of enrolment trends in MM or comparable programs based on data sourced from the DEST [Higher Education Statistics](http://www.dest.gov.au) website.
- Data relating to trends in MM programs was obtained by scanning the websites of selected institutions.
- Data on employment and career outcomes for students was obtained from [Graduate Careers Council of Australia](http://www.gcca.edu.au) publications.

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*Links to Strategic Planning*

_Institutional Research Consultancy Unit*
*RMIT Environmental Scanning Guide, Version 1, September 2003*
The RMIT Strategic Plan and Direction, “Dissolving the Boundaries”, translates RMIT’s mission, vision and values into long and medium term goals and challenges.

“Dissolving the Boundaries” also describes the strategies which have been developed for pursuing organisational goals and sets performance indicators and targets which allow the periodic measurement of progress in the implementation of strategies in key areas. Schools/Groups, in turn, are guided by the RMIT Strategic Plan when devising their specific strategy and action plans in order to ensure alignment. The figure below sets out an indicative strategic planning model.

The achievement of organisation and School/Group goals demands a capacity for flexibility and responsiveness to changed realities. ES encourages and accommodates iterative reappraisal and re-planning processes by exploring changes in the University’s external strategic environment and taking account of shifting internal realities (such as changes in RMIT’s staff and student profile, its resource base or its priorities).

For example, schools/groups may decide to apply ES at various points in the RMIT Annual Business Planning Cycle including:

- Making business decisions about academic and research programs
- Reviewing programs against quality, viability and relevance criteria
- Reviewing TAFE and HE Program and Profile performance

A copy of the RMIT Annual Business Planning Cycle can be found at ATTACHMENT E.

**In addition, this ES Guide should be seen as a complementary document to the Schools/Departments Business Planning Framework 2004-2006.**
3 HOW DO WE DO IT?

An environmental assessment, unlike other future studies or other research, is usually limited to looking at current published literature and other immediately available sources such as Bureau of Statistics reports. It does not attempt historical analysis, experimental research or the searching out of all possible information on a subject. The assessment identifies and examines current trends in order to explore their implications for the future.

*Environmental analysis is a fact gathering exercise: collecting and examining data that suggest future trends and changes.*

In conducting an environmental assessment, an organisation looks within the organisation, to other organisations in the industry and to the overall business environment to identify trends and conditions that may give rise to issues requiring attention.

Table 1 outlines the key internal, industry and external environmental factors impacting on the performance of RMIT. The classification used is a convenient one as there are many overlaps between the three environments described, particularly between the Industry and external environments. Again, for convenience, this guide adopts the STEEP nomenclature (Social-Technological-Environmental-Economic-Educational-Political) in structuring its approach to ES.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Internal environment</th>
<th>Industry Environment</th>
<th>General Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Functional effectiveness</td>
<td>Students/parents</td>
<td>Social/Demographic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Processes</td>
<td>Industry</td>
<td>Technological</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resources</td>
<td>Competitors</td>
<td>Environment/sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation structure</td>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Business partners</td>
<td>Political/industrial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RMIT Council</td>
<td>Workforce/Unions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Governments:Federal, State, local</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Table 1: SOURCES OF CHANGES PRODUCING ISSUES¹</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Very often environmental scanning of the internal environment and industry environment occurs routinely, if tacitly, within an organisational unit as staff go about their work. Staff who are at the interface with students and other clients, other institutions, industries, government departments etc are well-placed to detect changes and trends in their immediate environments and feed this information into decision-making processes.

However, routine, tacit scanning by itself does not meet the needs of effective strategic planning and a responsive organisation – a more systematic process is required. The keys to successful ES are active and open exploration of our communities incorporating diverse sources of information and diverse viewpoints. For

¹ Adapted from Hubbard, 2000.
example, ES is our opportunity to take a fresh, objective look at educational needs. Resulting information often will reaffirm present program directions but should also prompt exploration of new needs and audiences.

In systematic approaches to ES, organisations often undertake a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, an approach which bridges the three sources of changes outlined in Table 1, as part of its environmental assessment for strategic planning. In broad terms, internal analysis identifies the strength and weaknesses of an organisation or unit while external analysis identifies opportunities and threats. Notwithstanding this, ES can have an exclusively external focus.

However in more practical terms, there are a series of decision steps that can be identified in conducting environmental scanning activities. These are summarised in Figure 1.

Figure 2: Sample mechanism for conducting environmental scans
THE PROCESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL SCANNING

Step 1 Identify Themes or Issues

RMIT Schools/Groups are encouraged to engage in continuous scanning. Scans can be classified into two general categories:

- general in nature – a general scan of the external environment using the STEEP nomenclature and a general assessment of internal capabilities
- focused – scan focuses on emerging themes or issues which have been identified by leadership teams.

The themes/issues identified may vary in substance and complexity depending on the organisational level – whole organisation/portfolio/school. In either approach, Es is more effective when applied to broad rather than overly narrow themes and impacts.

A useful method for identifying themes/issues is to evaluate them against the criteria of likelihood of occurrence and importance to the performance of the organisation or Schools/Groups.

A standardised tool for this purpose is shown at ATTACHMENT A.

For example, a possible theme for examination and analysis in the higher education and VET contexts may be the emergence of new industries and the decline of some old ones—government and private sector investment in research and infrastructure is increasing in design, alternative energy and biotechnology industries. Developments such as these raise questions such as:

What does this mean for RMIT or our School/Group now, in five years' time or in ten years’ time?
What are some appropriate courses of action in response to these developments in the short, medium and longer terms?

Some ES activity is already occurring within RMIT and its Schools/Groups. This is generally associated with institutional reporting regimes and with the administrative and academic calendars. ATTACHMENT B provides a summary.

Example
The General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS)

Why is this an issue?
GATS was established by the Uruguay Round of WTO-sponsored GATT negotiations (1986-1994) to regulate liberalisation of trade in services, including education. In 1993/4, Australia agreed to market access for and equal treatment of foreign providers in private education only. Australia is currently engaged in a GATS negotiating round which is expected to conclude in early 2005.

Any changes to or further developments in agreements concerning the provision of tertiary education services will impact RMIT’s position as a provider of VET and HE in Australia and overseas.
Step 2  Form work team and identify stakeholders

Leadership teams/sponsors form a team or identify an individual to conduct an ES, jointly determine the rationale and direction of the ES, identify the audience for ES report and identify stakeholders of knowledge to be consulted, either as sources of data or information or to assist in dissemination of ES outputs.a

The role of the IRCU is to support and complement the ES efforts of RMIT Schools/Groups. Assistance provided to the School of Creative Media, referred to on Page 3 of this Guide, is an example of IRCU’s role.

Example
The IRCU has been given responsibility to conduct the ES and analysis of GATS for a university-wide audience. The focus of the ES is RMIT’s external environment. The ES will be posted on the IRCU website.
Step 3 Identify Data Sources

Currently there are a number of data and information sources that the Planning Group and senior management team subscribes to for ongoing information and updates.

The IRCU has compiled tailored resources as a starting point for environmental scanning by RMIT schools/groups. Lists of these resources can be found in Attachment F: ES Resources.

In general the IRCU selects data sources on the basis of:

- The source document should be relatively permanent
- The source document should be available through electronic means, via the Library’s subscribed data sources and databases or websites of recognised organisations which allow free access or be a book or journal held in the library and
- The source must have a high degree of credibility and quality (eg. refereed journals are preferred to newspapers)

Some suggested steps to get started:

- Scanners should begin by consulting within their work unit/school/faculty and with other Schools/Groups of RMIT that might have an interest in the issue to identify whether any research has already been conducted
- Scanners should examine the sources listed on the IRCU website as these have been selected for relevance and credibility
- Scanners should conduct searches using the Library website

A quick way to satisfy more immediate needs for information about the external and internal environment may include:

- interviewing major decision-makers in order to identify critical trends and potential developments
- and examining past program reviews, the last institutional self-study and the most current master, strategy and action plans.

A list of information sources used in the ES must be included in the report.

EXAMPLE

Background

- IRCU began its ES on GATS by examining the WTO website for background information followed by other central sites including DEST, DFAT, DITR, OECD.
- Further background material was located by a search of e-journal databases accessed through the RMIT Library website
- More recent commentary and analysis was located by searching the “LexisNexis Academic” data base on the Library website

Trends

On-line sources of quantitative information which points to historical trends in areas related to the issue was located as above and includes:

- AVCC , Key Statistics in Higher Education, Nov 2002
- RMIT , 2001 Annual Report
- DEST, Selected Higher Education Statistics, 2003
- ABS, 8126.0 Information Technology, Australia

Institutional Research Consultancy Unit
RMIT Environmental Scanning Guide, Version 1, September 2003
Step 4 Analysing the Data

Once the relevant data has been located, the task is to collate and analyse the data to produce grounded recommendations or future implications. The approach to analysis will be influenced by whether the data is quantitative or qualitative.

Quantitative data: for the purpose of ES, quantitative data analysis is likely to take the exploratory rather than confirmatory form. Exploratory data analysis involves summarising and presenting the data in tables, charts, graphs and other diagrammatic forms, enabling patterns and relationships to be discerned which are not apparent in the raw data. It is employed when great statistical rigour is not required.

The above is an example of a non-quantifying method of data analysis. It employs the four basic steps in this approach: comprehending the context, synthesising themes into new, integrated patterns, theorising and recontextualising or making generalisations. Other approaches include cognitive mapping, data displays, grounded theory and quasi-judicial procedure.
Step 5 Dissemination Method That Best Matches Audience

In determining appropriate methods/formats by which the findings and analysis of the ES will be disseminated and shared, and the level of sharing which is appropriate, there are a number of considerations including:

- Disseminate outcomes of ES in a way that maximises the effectiveness and impact of that information on organisational learning, decision making processes and planning throughout the organisation.
- Different stakeholders require different forms of information and dissemination techniques. Understanding stakeholder needs can inform the dissemination technique deployed, the degree of access to the information and the degree of reciprocity expected. For example, management staff may require a brief report including implications for RMIT while students are more receptive to multi-media, seminar or poster presentations.
- In arriving at a report format practical considerations of resourcing, breadth of available information and “user-friendliness” also need to be taken into account.

The application of criteria of Frequency, Format, Craft and Category of ES product can also assist in selecting appropriate methods, formats and media:

- Frequency: regular or occasional
- Format: structured or ad-hoc
- Craft: polished or unpolished
- Category: internal report/working paper/discussion paper/monograph or refereed publication

There are two broad categories of ES product:

Ongoing and periodic outputs: ES products disseminated as required via the School/Group’s website and include snapshot reports, fact sheets and forecasts. These are used to disseminate ongoing and periodic ES output.

Focussed Reports: Focussed reports and research reviews should be conducted to inform critical nodes in the strategic planning cycle at RMIT and informing revisions of institutional and faculty plans.

EXAMPLE
IRCU divided the report into major sections in accordance with the five key external causal conditions (or major factors) identified in Table 1.

Trends and data which are presented in this report do not claim to be all-encompassing nor exhaustive. Instead they focus on key issues which will provoke discussion and questions that need to be addressed by managers throughout RMIT. Users of the report may choose to select themes or trends for further, more detailed, study.

This format is amenable to, and encourages, connections being made across themes, trends and data as well as to separate consideration of individual topics.

A sample section of this report is attached (Attachment B).

The report was placed on the IRCU website and emailed to selected individuals and Schools/Groups.
**Step 6 Include Feedback Loop and Evaluation**

The dissemination of ES results must incorporate opportunities for dialogues and feedback so that knowledge sharing is a beneficial outcome for both the receiver of ES results and the provider.

Feedback loops are integral to knowledge creation as they further opportunities to share knowledge and improve knowledge products. All ES outputs must include the source of the ES and contact details for more information and a means of evaluating feedback to improve its ES processes.

**Example**
IRCU included name, contact phone and email information and an email and web-link in a prominent position on the ES report.

IRCU attached a standardised tick-box, one page, feedback sheet to the ES report for easy emailing back to IRCU.

IRCU also requested feedback from participants in scenario planning activities which used the ES as starting material (hard copy of standard feedback sheet in this case).
Step 7 Assessing the Impact of ES

Environmental scan can produce a range of outcomes:
- Knowledge creation, including knowledge products and knowledge sharing;
- Capture organisational history through the documentation of feedback, perspectives, issues and tensions on identified topics;
- Create tools / resources valued for internal / external uses;
- Encourage communities of practice; and
- Contribute to research endeavours.
- Challenge existing paradigms

Appropriate measurable indicators need to be devised in order to capture the extent of outcomes/impact of the ES.

Example
IRCU measured:
- the number of hits on IRCU website to ES link,
- number of inquiries and request for advice/assistance,
- number of ES conducted (this was ascertained both on the basis of numbers submitted to IRCU and through survey of faculties/schools),
- levels of practice of scenario planning at RMIT;
- the number of ES and scenario planning links/documents on RMIT websites.

IRCU also aggregated and analysed the content of feedback sheets returned to IRCU.
### ATTACHMENT A: ISSUE ASSESSMENT MATRICES

#### PROBABILITY OF HAPPENING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Importance</th>
<th>Medium Importance</th>
<th>Low Importance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### ABILITY TO INFLUENCE/MANAGE/CONTROL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical</th>
<th>Potentially Critical</th>
<th>Not Critical</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Potentially Critical</td>
<td>Low Critical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Not Critical</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**ASSESSMENT SCREEN FOR IMPORTANCE OF IMPLICATIONS**

**ASSESSMENT SCREEN FOR CRITICALITY OF IMPLICATIONS**
Relevant observations:

- The initial increase in the number of companies from 411 to 868 was followed by a reduction to 814 as a large number of the new entrants failed.
- Similarly, productivity rose from $231k per employee to $513k per employee, fuelled to a large extent by the reduced levels of overall employment as well as reduced levels of employment per company.
ATTACHMENT C: SAMPLE ANALYSIS & REPORTING FORMAT

Causal Factor: Political/regulatory

Trends

The current situation

- In the Uruguay Round of negotiations (1993/94) Australia agreed to Market Access (allow foreign providers access to the Australian market) and Equal Treatment (not discriminate between local and foreign providers) of foreign providers in private education only, from the beginning of 1995.
- Australia has made commitments to allow market access to foreign providers in Australia through three modes of supply: Cross-Border (distance education), Consumption Abroad (Australian students travelling to study overseas) and Commercial Presence (establishing a physical presence in Australia).b
- Australia committed in 1995 to National Treatment for Cross-Border and Consumption Abroad but did not commit to National Treatment for Commercial Presence in order to maintain a capacity to discriminate between local and foreign providers in relation to government funding.
- Australia is one of 32 WTO members, of a total of 145, to make commitments in regard to tertiary education.
- Australia has not entered national treatment agreements in relation to public education and has committed to the protection of all public research grants in all sectors.
- Currently there are two foreign owned universities operating in Australia (Bond and Notre Dame) and a significant proportion of VET and foundation studies providers are foreign-owned

Future developments

- The current negotiating round commenced in early 2000 in the WTO. Participants were to file requests asking trading partners to open their markets in service areas by mid-2002. Countries that were the subject of requests were to present offers to open their markets in service areas by 31 March, 2003. This process is continuing and progress will be reviewed at the Mexico Conference of the WTO between 10 and 14 September 2003. The negotiating round is expected to be completed by early 2005.
- Failure to reach agreement on higher education may lead to a new round of negotiations after talks conclude.
- The most recent indications are that the negotiations have resulted in little or no movement in regard to education services.
- Australia is a member of the WTO Education Alliance, a group of 21 WTO members which aims to further the discussion of the impact of GATS on education services. Australia is hosting a forum of the Alliance in 2004
• DEST is considering the lowering/elimination of barriers multilaterally through the WTO and APEC and through a number of bilateral agreements (Eg with US, Thailand).

• Australia is one of the most active proponents of trade liberalisation (along with the US and New Zealand) and is encouraging “autonomous liberalisation”, that is outside the WTO, by WTO and non-WTO (eg Vietnam) countries. Autonomous liberalisation is not binding on governments, enabling them to modify their policy positions in the future as circumstances change.

• Australia’s bilateral free trade agreements (with Singapore and New Zealand and being negotiated with Thailand and the US) all include education.

• As a component of its Higher Education reforms, the federal government intends to make available in 2005, a total of 2,500 OS-HELP loans for Australian students studying overseas, increasing to a total of 10,000 loans per year by 2008. Loans will be distributed between eligible institutions for allocation to students.

Implications for RMIT

• The extension of the government Loans Scheme to Australian students studying overseas is consistent with its commitments to Market Access and National Treatment for Consumption Abroad. However the commitments may require the government to offer loans to all Australian students studying overseas. This may exacerbate the “brain-drain” and create added domestic competition for domestic fee-paying students, particularly the most talented.

• Australia’s WTO commitments to Cross Border access may require the government to extend the Loans Scheme to students who are undertaking distance education at foreign universities thus increasing domestic competition for on-line services.

• RMIT’s medium and long term operations in Singapore, Vietnam and Malaysia may be impacted by the outcome of further trade negotiations with those countries. This issue requires further attention.
## ATTACHMENT D: CURRENT ES ACTIVITY AT RMIT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ES Outputs</th>
<th>Information Scope</th>
<th>Timeframe and Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i.research</td>
<td>• Internal and external (wide ranging)</td>
<td>• Monthly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Edited by Institutional Research Advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pathways Domain</td>
<td>• Internal and external (VET, student career pathways, student life issues);</td>
<td>• Every 6 weeks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pathways Domain group steer content</td>
<td>• Edited by Institutional Research Advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focused Reports</td>
<td>• On request from management;</td>
<td>• As required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• In response to critical events (strategic, industry – specific)</td>
<td>• Strategic Economist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Strategic Advisor – Industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Institutional Research Advisor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refereed /</td>
<td>• Sector wide, national and international issues</td>
<td>• Three per year</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional Papers</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Planning Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monographs</td>
<td>• Focussed on RMIT strategic issues</td>
<td>• As required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Institutional Research Consultancy Unit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data and Statistics</td>
<td>• Internal and external sources of data</td>
<td>• Around critical planning / profile events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Business Analyst</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• IR Systems Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminars</td>
<td>• RMIT strategic issues, information and discussions sessions</td>
<td>• Around critical planning / profile events</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Planning Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scenario Planning</td>
<td>• Communities of practice; internal and external sources of information and input</td>
<td>• Around critical planning / profile events</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Strategic Economist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Networks</td>
<td>• Communities of practice; internal / external links</td>
<td>• Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Planning Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web Resources</td>
<td>• Communication and linkage</td>
<td>• Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• IT Systems Coordinator</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FAQS

1. What is an environmental scan?

An environmental scan (ES) is an assessment and analysis of the conditions, circumstances and influences, both internal and external to the organisation, which may affect the organisation’s ability to achieve its objectives.

2. Why conduct environmental scans?

Environmental scanning assists RMIT in achieving objectives by providing information about the most appropriate ways to pursue those objectives. It also assists in the formulation of objectives and in deciding about the efficacy of existing objectives.

3. What is meant by the general external environment, the industry environment and the internal environment of an organisation?

The general environment, also known as the macro-environment, refers to those general influences which affect an industry. It can be broken up into Social, Technological, Economic, Environmental and Political factors (STEEP) for convenience.

The industry environment refers to those factors which impact on the performance and competitiveness of organisations within it. Examples: other institutions, students, industry, government.

The internal environment refers to those factors which impact on the strategic capabilities of the organisation, Examples: effectiveness of functions and processes, levels and quality of tangible and intangible resources, quality of governance.

4. What is the purpose of this ES Guide?

The guide is a tool designed to encourage Schools/Groups of RMIT to engage in environmental scanning (ES) and to assist them in their ES activities. It also aims to facilitate organisational learning about RMIT’s capabilities and its external environment through enhanced communication and knowledge capture mechanisms.

5. Who should use the Guide?

The guide is designed for general use at all levels of RMIT, both academic and non-academic. However it is expected that the main users will be management teams in Schools and non-school Groups within RMIT.

6. What are some examples of how the Guide can be used?

The Guide might be applied to a general assessment of the general, industry or internal environments or to specific priority themes identified by Schools/Groups when making a business case for whatever purpose. Examples of business cases include: program development and renewal, organisational restructuring, workforce
changes, entry into partnership arrangements with other institutions or industry, new academic or research programs and new infrastructure.

7. Do Schools/Groups have to use the guide?

Schools/Groups of RMIT are not compelled to conduct ES strictly according to this guide - the guide offers a suggested method and some resources. However one anticipated outcome of this guide is that there will be greater consistency and uniformity in ES activity across RMIT which will make the sharing and integration of ES output much easier.

8. What is the role of IRCU in ES?

IRCU will continue to refine and develop the ES Guide and associated resources and to provide advice and assistance to Schools/Groups undertaking ES activities. IRCU will, in collaboration with the RMIT library, maintain a central bank of RMIT ES reports as a means of capturing corporate knowledge.

9. What is strategic planning?

Strategic planning refers to the formulation of plans to achieve organisational objectives taking into account the mission and values of the organisation, developments in its external environment and its internal capabilities. A strategic plan generally includes long-term objectives and comprehensive strategies for achieving them.

10. What is meant by mission, vision and values (MVV) of an organisation?

MVV is a set of propositions which set the strategic direction of an organisation.

11. What is an action plan?

An action plan consists of the means by which strategies will be communicated and executed. It includes specific objectives and how they will be pursued.

12. What is scenario planning?

Scenario planning is a managerial tool used to anticipate structural change and plan for the consequences of structural change in the economic, social and industrial environment.

13. What is meant by stakeholders? Key stakeholders?

Stakeholders are those individuals or groups which have an interest in the business strategy of the organisation.

Key stakeholders are those individuals or groups which can influence the business strategy of the organisation.
ATTACHMENT E: RMIT ANNUAL PLANNING & REVIEW ACTIVITY CYCLE*

(* provided by Planning Consultancy, RMIT Planning Group)

October - December

- Finalise Unit Business Plans
- Finalise Annual University Business Plan (incl. 3 year rolling plans & Budget)
- Finalise individual performance plans.
- Annual University Business Plan submitted to Council
- Annual Budget submitted to Council
- ‘Sign-off’ VET Performance Agreement with OTTE

September

- Review HE Program and Profile performance
- Draw together environmental scan and performance data.
- Review Strategic Plan & update strategic change priorities for RMIT
- Development of University & unit business plans
- Development of University Annual Budget

July - August

VCE & Council

Approve:
- Strategic Plan
- Annual University Business Plan
- Annual Budget
- Annual Report

Monitor:
- Finances (monthly to VCE & Council)
- Performance Snapshots (including strategic priority projects - monthly to VCE; quarterly to Council)
- Portfolio Reports (quarterly to VCE; annually to Council)
- University Balanced Scorecard (annually to VCE & Council)

- ‘Sign-off’ HE profile with DEST
- Undertake formal mid-year reviews of Individual & Group Performance
- Development of budget parameters

January - March

- Finalise Integrated VCE Workplan
- Undertake Individual Performance Reviews
- Review Planning & Budgeting Cycle
- Develop and distribute annual Business Development Planning Pack (incl profile & budget parameters and assoc templates)
- Review TAFE Program and Profile performance

April - June

- Commence development of University & unit business plans (incl profiles & budgets).
  - based on performance, environmental scan and industry review data against quality, viability & relevance criteria - guided by Business

Quality Activities (eg ISO, AQTF, AUQA, Organisational Reviews) scheduled annually

Internal Audit Activities agreed by Audit & Risk Management Committee annually
ATTACHMENT F: ES RESOURCES

Environmental Scanning Links, Volume 1
Alphabetical Listing of Major Categories

The following list of internet links has been constructed by IRCU for the use of RMIT Schools/Groups engaging in environmental scanning and is intended to complement the RMIT Environmental Scanning Guide and the list titled “Environmental Scanning Links, Volume 2: STEEP + I Classification” which are also available on the IRCU website. The links have been organised into broad categories which are ordered alphabetically.

The list should be seen as a starting point for identifying sources and collecting data which is relevant to the environmental scan being undertaken.

These links do not represent a comprehensive list of information sources. Further assistance in identifying suitable sources of information may be gained from the RMIT Library and/or IRCU.

Business Organisations - Australia
BCA

Demographics - Australian and International
ACNielsen
Asian Demographic Forecasts
American Demographics

Education Research
Education Research - Australia
ACER - Australian Council for Educational Research
Australian Association for Research in Education - Home Page
Australian Consortium for Social and Political Research Incorporated, ANU
Australian e-Humanities Gateway
Dusseldorp Skills Forum
Education Network Australia - Edna
Graduate Careers Council of Australia

Education Research - International
Carnegie Corporation (US)
Demos – Data Base of International Research Organisations
Education Index (US)
ERIC -- Educational Resources Information Center (UK)
IDP Education Australia
Index to Theses Quick Search (US)
The Chronicle of Higher Education
The Learning MarketSpace

Electronic Media - Australia

Institutional Research Consultancy Unit
RMIT Environmental Scanning Guide, Version 1, September 2003
ABC Online

Environmental Scanning - International
http://www.leadingfuturists.biz/scanning.htm
World Future Society
Worldwatch

Evaluation - Australia
Australasian Evaluation Society
Evaluation Society Home Page

Government
Australian Government
Australian Bureau of Statistics
Australian National Training Authority
Australian Research Council
Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training
Commonwealth Government
MCEETYA
Parliament of Australia
Productivity Commission

Victorian Government
Department of Education & Training
Victorian Government Website
VLESC - Victorian Learning and Employment Skills Commission
VTAC - Victorian Tertiary Admissions Centre

Government - International
Department for Education and Skills –UK
SourceOECD (On-Line Library of OECD)
The European Union On-line
U.S. Dept of Education
United Nations
World Bank
World Trade Organisation

Higher Education
Higher Education -Australia
ASCILITE - Australasian Society for Computers In Learning In Tertiary Education
HERDSA - Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia Inc.
Higher Education Division
UNIVERSITAS 21

Higher Education -International
State Higher Education Executive Officers -US
The Conference Board - Networking and Research for Business Executives
The Observatory on Borderless Higher Education -UK
Higher Education - Australian Representative Bodies
Association for Tertiary Education Management
Australian Association for Social Research
Australian Universities Teaching Committee
Group of Eight
Institution of Engineers, Australia
The Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia
The Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee

Higher Education- International Representative Bodies
Association of Commonwealth Universities
H-Net, Humanities & Social Sciences Online

Institutional Research – Australian and International
Assessment and Institutional Research Homepage
Association for Institutional Research
Australasian Association for Institutional Research
Higher Education Research Institute (HERI)
Institutional Research

Journals and Publications Indexes - International
Carfax Publishing Ltd - International Periodical Publishers
CQM Journal On-Line
Taylor & Francis Journals Navigation
Welcome to Routledge

Knowledge Management - Australia
KM Challenge (Conference, Melbourne 2003)

Labour Organisations –Australia and International
Australian Council of Trade Unions
International Labour Organisation

Newspapers
Newspapers- Australian
Australian Financial Review
CAMPUS REVIEW ON-LINE EDITION
The Age
The Australian

Newspapers - International
The Times Higher Education Supplement
The Wall Street Journal

Political Parties - Australia
Australian Labor Party
Liberal Party of Australia
National Party of Australia
The Greens
Quality Management
Quality Management - Australia
AOF Website
AUQA
Australian Quality Council
Benchmarking in Australia, Benchmarking PLUS,

Quality Management - International
Benchmarking Exchange and Best Practices
CRQ - The Centre for Research into Quality - UCE, Birmingham
EFQM
International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
NEW ZEALAND UNIVERSITIES ACADEMIC AUDIT UNIT
NIST Quality Program (US)
Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
W. Edwards Deming Institute

Search Links
Google Search
Open Directory Project

VET
VET Australia
NCVER Australia home page
Welcome to the RCVET Home Page

VET - Australian Representative Bodies
TAFE Directors Australia
VTA - Victorian TAFE Association
Environmental Scanning Links, Volume 2:
STEPP + I Classification

The following internet links are intended to complement the RMIT Environmental Scanning Guide and the list titled “Environmental Scanning Links, Volume 1” which are also available on the IRCU website. This list provides a brief description of the information which is available on each of the websites.

The links are organised in accordance with the STEEP (Social, Technological, Environmental, Economic, Political) classification described in the ES Guide although an additional category - International - has been added.

These links do not represent a comprehensive list of information sources. Further assistance in identifying suitable sources of information may be gained from the RMIT Library and/or IRCU.

SOCIAL/DEMOGRAPHIC

AusStats - Australian Bureau of Statistics
Provides access to the ABS Time Series, all ABS publications from 1998 onwards, and Census Basic Community Profiles to the Statistical Local Area

Academic Research Library
Newspapers (U.S) and a broad range of general research periodicals.

AARE - Australian Association for Research in Education
http://www.swin.edu.au/aare/

ACER - The Australian Council for Educational Research
http://www.acer.edu.au/

AGIS Plus Text
Australian database covering all aspects of law. Indexed journals from 1975. Full-text journals (117) from 1999.

APA Full-Text - Australian Public Affairs Full-Text
Australian database covering over 130 full-text journals from the APAIS database with emphasis on business, law, sociology, public affairs and environmental science.

Blue Web'n
http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/bluewebn/

Campus Review
Available online via APA Full-Text - Australian Public Affairs Full-Text

Contemporary Women's Issues
From Afghanistan to Zimbabwe this database covers all women's areas including religion, work, sexuality, health, education and environment.
Chronicle of Higher Education
http://chronicle.com/chronicle/
Published weekly, The Chronicle is the No. 1 news source for college and university faculty members and administrators. A subscription to The Chronicle includes free access to all of this Web site and to Academe Today, our daily e-mail newsletter.

DEST - Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training
Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training
DEST-Statistics related to higher education
A comprehensive set of statistics collections referred to as the Higher Education Statistics Collection. Data included in the Higher Education Statistics Collection relate to courses conducted by higher education institutions; numbers and characteristics of students undertaking courses; student load; completion of units of study and courses; students' liabilities under HECS; numbers and characteristics of staff in higher education institutions; income and expenditure for higher education institutions; research activity; and the educational profiles of higher education institutions.

DE&T - Department of Education & Training

Digital Dissertations Complete
Dissertation Abstracts file from 1861 and full-text downloads available for all dissertations from 1997 onwards.

EBSCO Business Source Premier
Full text business publications. The database also includes other sources of full text information such as country economic reports from the EIU, DRI-WEFA, ICON Group and CountryWatch. The EIU country profiles and reports are in full text from 1996 on.

EdNA Online: Education Network Australia

EdResearch Online
EdResearch Online is produced by ACER Cunningham Library containing 14,314 online education research documents and articles. These form a subset of the Australian Education Index. Some documents will incur a charge if purchased online. Check the library catalogue those if the journal or publication is already available at RMIT. 71% of the documents are linked to freely available full text documents. A further 29% can be purchased online for AUS22 per article. There is no charge to search the database or access the free full text documents. You will only incur a charge if you purchase one of the 4,405 articles with copyright protection.
Education-line provides an internet medium through which authors can present early versions of their work and interested parties can keep abreast of topical issues in educational research. The focus of Education-line is on texts which are relevant to the study, practice and administration of education at a professional level. Texts are supplied for addition to the collection by their authors, often as a result of presentations made at conferences.

Education World
http://www.education-world.com/

GMID - Global Market Information Database
GMID provides detailed statistics and market reports for over 200 countries. It includes country economic data, household profiles, literacy and education data, demographics, expenditure patterns, consumer market analysis, market sizes and forecasts. Allows for cross-country comparison and analysis. The Consumer Lifestyle reports include commentary on tertiary education participation and trends.

ERIC
- ERIC Clearinghouse Websites
  http://www.eric.ed.gov/
- ERIC Digests
  http://www.ericfacility.net/ericdigests/index

E*Subscribe
Full text access to ERIC documents coming soon.

Expanded Academic ASAP
Generalist database covering broad range of disciplines.

MCEETYA - Ministerial Council on Education Employment, Training and Youth Affairs
The areas of responsibility covered by the Council are pre-primary education, primary and secondary education, vocational education and training, higher education, employment and linkages between employment/labour market programs and education and training, adult and community education, youth policy programs and cross-sectoral matters.
http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mceetya/

OECD - SourceOECD
Access to the full-text of OECD material. From the statistics module you can connect to The OECD Education Database, which provides internationally comparable data on key aspects of education systems.

ProQuest
A compilation of over 20 databases covering all disciplines.

SofWEB
http://www.sofweb.vic.edu.au

SourceOECD
Access to the full-text of OECD material, including OECD Economic Outlook and OECD Economic Survey.

**Teaching and Learning Journals**

http://www.rmit.edu.au/browse?SIMID=nxq98s8d5fd

List of teaching and learning journals of potential interest to the RMIT Teaching and Learning community. Created by Mike Brooks.

**Times higher education supplement**

Higher education jobs, news and books for university and college professionals in teaching and research. This site provides RMIT Library site license users with full access to current and archived content.

**UNESCO Information Sources**

All UNESCO information sources from a single location. Includes 123 bibliographic, referral and full-text databases and 57 information sources from Headquarters and Field Offices.

**United Nations**

Access to the UN daily newssheet in the areas of the environment, crime, economics & trade, women's issues, human rights & justice, children, and population.

**VOCED - Vocational education and Training Database**

Contains references to research reports, journal articles, and policy and curriculum documents from educational and government bodies concerned with adult and vocational education and training in Australia.

**TECHNOLOGICAL**

**ACM (Association for Computing Machinery) Digital Library**

Includes all ACM journals, magazines, transactions and archives. Also includes all ACM SIG conference proceedings plus archives.

**Computer Database**

Computer science electronics, internet, communications.

**Digital Dissertations Complete**

Dissertation Abstracts file from 1861 and full-text downloads available for all dissertations from 1997 onwards.

**IEL (IEEE/IEE Electronic Library)**

Electrical, electronic and communication engineering, computer science and computer systems engineering.

**Gartner Research**

Provides access to strategic IT research and Knowledge Management information.
Online Currents
is an independent Australian journal providing review and analysis of online information. Online Currents has covered developments in the online world since 1986. It reports the news and analyses it. It provides critical reviews of Internet services, CD-ROMs and online databases.
http://www.onlinecurrents.com.au

MagPortal
Read articles from Wired, PCWorld, MacWorld, Forbes, TIME Europe, TIME Asia and D-Lib and another 160 full-text journals from the Business, IT, Science, Education and Social Sciences.

ProQuest
A compilation of over 20 databases covering all disciplines.

NCSTRL - Networked Computer Science Technical Reference Library
An international collection of computer science research reports and papers. Of relevance to the computer science, engineering and industrial design areas.

ENVIRONMENT/SUSTAINABILITY

Blackwell Synergy
Over 200 full-text journals in the biomedical and ecology areas

Digital Dissertations Complete
Dissertation Abstracts file from 1861 and full-text downloads available for all dissertations from 1997 onwards.

Environment Australia Online
From the Department of Environment and Heritage, this searchable site includes updated information about Departmental structure and groups, agencies and ministerial councils, a subject index to environmental information, a list of environmental databases and links to other relevant sites.

EnviroLink
http://www.envirolink.org/
A non-profit organisation, EnviroLink is one of the world's largest environmental clearinghouses, dedicated to providing the most comprehensive, up-to-date resources available.

Environmental News Network
http://www.enn.com/
Daily news reports of critical environmental issues around the world, features, multimedia, special reports, and forums.

EPA - United States Environmental Protection Agency
http://www.epa.gov/
**OHS file ONLINE - Australian**
Australian federal and state legislation, codes of practice, guidelines, etc. Some overseas material. Full-text documents from over 130 organisations. Covers Health, Nursing, Overseas companies, OH&S, Project and Facilities Management.

**Nature**
International weekly journal of science, and the flagship product of the Nature family of journals. This site provides RMIT Library site license users with full access to current and archived content.

**ProQuest**
A compilation of over 20 databases covering all disciplines.

**Science Direct**
Multidisciplinary database of over 1150 full-text journals.

**United Nations**
Access to the UN daily newssheet in the areas of the environment, crime, economics & trade, women's issues, human rights & justice, children, and population.

**ECONOMIC**

**ABI/INFORM Global**
International business, management marketing, accounting, business computing, international company and product information. Includes full-text access to The Economist.

**EBSCO Business Source Premier**
Full text business publications. The database also includes other sources of full text information such as country economic reports from the EIU, DRI-WEFA, ICON Group and CountryWatch. The EIU country profiles and reports are in full text from 1996 on.

**Gartner Research**
Australian database providing access to strategic IT research and Knowledge Management information.

**GMID - Global Market Information Database**
GMID provides detailed statistics and market reports for over 200 countries. It includes country economic data, household profiles, literacy and education data, demographics, expenditure patterns, consumer market analysis, market sizes and forecasts. Allows for cross-country comparison and analysis. The Consumer Lifestyle reports include commentary on tertiary education participation and analysis. The IBISWorld - Australian Industry Reports
Detailed industry analysis including key statistics, market size, industry segmentation, participants, 5-year outlook. Current RMIT Library subscription includes access to the
industry report ‘Higher Education in Australia’. This report is updated every 4 months.

LexisNexis Academic
Major Australian and overseas newspapers, business magazines and reports.

ProQuest
A compilation of over 20 databases covering all disciplines. For regional coverage, ProQuest Asian Business and ProQuest European Business would be recommended.

SourceOECD
Access to the full-text of OECD material, including OECD Economic Outlook and OECD Economic Survey.

POLITICAL/INDUSTRIAL

Digital Dissertations Complete
Dissertation Abstracts file from 1861 and full-text downloads available for all dissertations from 1997 onwards.

Emerald Fulltext
Marketing, general management, human resources, quality, property, operations, production & economics, library & information services, information management, training & education and engineering

LexisNexis Academic
Major Australian and overseas newspapers, business magazines and reports.

SourceOECD
Access to the full-text of OECD material, including OECD Economic Outlook and OECD Economic Survey.

VOCED - Vocational education and Training Database
Contains references to research reports, journal articles, and policy and curriculum documents from educational and government bodies concerned with adult and vocational education and training in Australia.

INTERNATIONAL/GLOBAL


APA Full-Text - Australian Public Affairs Full-Text
Australian database covering over 130 full-text journals from the APAIS database with emphasis on business, law, sociology, public affairs and environmental science.

CIA - The World Factbook
US government profiles of countries and territories around the world. Provides information about the country's geography, people, government, and economy. Includes maps.

Country Reports: updated yearly
Institutional Research Consultancy Unit
RMIT Environmental Scanning Guide, Version 1, September 2003
Country information from around the world.

**Digital Dissertations Complete**
Dissertation Abstracts file from 1861 and full-text downloads available for all dissertations from 1997 onwards.

**EBSCO Business Source Premier**
Full text business publications. The database also includes other sources of full text information such as country economic reports from the EIU, DRI-WEFA, ICON Group and CountryWatch. The EIU country profiles and reports are in full text from 1996 on.

**Expanded Academic ASAP**
Generalist database covering broad range of disciplines.

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GMID provides detailed statistics and market reports for over 200 countries. It includes country economic data, household profiles, literacy and education data, demographics, expenditure patterns, consumer market analysis, market sizes and forecasts. Allows for cross-country comparison and analysis. The Consumer Lifestyle reports include commentary on tertiary education participation and trends.

**LexisNexis Academic**
Major Australian and overseas newspapers, business magazines and reports.

**Library of Congress Country Studies**
Social, political and economic analysis of institutions and countries throughout the world. Sponsored by the US Army with focus on lesser-known regions of the world. Over 100 countries/regions are covered.

**ProQuest**
A compilation of over 20 databases covering all disciplines. For regional coverage, **ProQuest Asian Business** and **ProQuest European Business** would be recommended.

**Science Direct**
Multidisciplinary database of over 1150 full-text journals.

**SourceOECD**
Access to the full-text of OECD material, including **OECD Economic Outlook** and **OECD Economic Survey**.

**UNESCO Information Sources**
All UNESCO information sources from a single location. Includes 123 bibliographic, referral and full-text databases and 57 information sources from Headquarters and Field Offices.

**United Nations**
Access to the UN daily newssheet in the areas of the environment, crime, economics & trade, women's issues, human rights & justice, children, and population.
Continuous scanning may entail the designation of a professional/support person as scanner on a part time basis and a team of scanners who agree to rigourously and systematically review specific information sources.

References


About the Institutional Research Consultancy Unit (IRCU)

The IRCU is part of RMIT’s Planning Group.

The unit's mission is to:

- Assist and contribute to informed decision-making;
- Contribute to strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of RMIT's activities and programs;
- Be proactive in the study and advancement of tertiary education; and,
- Manage, share and create knowledge for the benefit of RMIT.

The main function of the IRCU is to co-ordinate the collection, organisation and analysis of institutional data and other quantitative and qualitative information to support institutional management, operations, decision-making and planning functions of RMIT University. The IRCU is also engaged in applied educational research, performance measurement, evaluation and assessment and is proactive in the study and advancement of tertiary education.

The IRCU Staff are:

Angel Calderon         Head
Andrew Brion           Business Analyst
David Garner           Strategic Advisor - Industry
Ann Hornsby            Executive Assistant
Josie Palermo          Institutional Research Advisor
David Rutherford       Strategic Economist (on secondment to Financial and Business Services to December, 2003)
Jim Tangas             Research Advisor
Neil Wentworth         Institutional Research Systems Coordinator
Katrina Woodland       Research Analyst