Research Active Procedure

1 Purpose

To define the minimum threshold standards used by the University to determine Research Active status, in accordance with the *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*.

2 Scope

This Procedure applies to all full-time or fractional Academic Employees who hold a continuing, contingent funded or fixed-term appointment.

3 Procedure Overview

This Procedure outlines the minimum threshold standards used to determine whether an individual meets Research Active status at the University.

This Procedure aligns with:

- *Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021*: Standard 4.1 Research

4 Procedures

4.1 Research Active threshold standards

The University defines Research Active status according to three minimum threshold standards, all of which are based on outputs over a five-year period (defined as the previous five calendar years):

1. Publication of at least six Research Outputs, with Research Outputs in at least four of the five years; OR

2. Publication of at least three Research Outputs, with Research Outputs in at least three of the five years AND securing funding to the University as a Principal Investigator through at least one externally funded Research project, which, at time of reporting, is providing income to the University; OR

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3. One Associate Supervision Higher Degree by Research (HDR) completion with four Research Outputs, with Research Outputs in at least three of the five years.

For the purposes of determining Research Active status, one authored Research book will normally be counted as equivalent to four Research Outputs.

The thresholds will be pro-rated by the employment fraction of the individual Academic Employee. At the beginning of each calendar year, the average employment fraction of the individual Employee, over the previous five years, will be calculated and the performance metrics will be divided by this fraction to assess Research Active status.

The thresholds represent a minimum standard to enable Principal Supervision of HDR Students. All Academic Employees should meet and strive to exceed the expectations described in the University's Academic Employee Expectations Framework.

Circumstances under which Employees are deemed Research Active without meeting the minimum thresholds are detailed in section 4.2.

4.2 Application of the Research Active threshold standards

4.2.1 Reporting on research performance

It is the responsibility of all Academic Employees to ensure Research performance data is accurately captured in the University's identified Research information management system.

The University's Research information management system is the only source used by the University for reporting Research performance data.

4.2.2 Higher Degree by Research Students

Academic Employees who are actively enrolled and making satisfactory academic progress in a HDR program either at the University or elsewhere, will be deemed Research Active for the duration of their candidature.

4.2.3 Current Academic Employees

Confirmation of an Academic Employee's Research Active status will be available through the University's human resources management system.

If an Academic Employee is deemed through the annual Performance Planning and Review process to meet the minimum Research Active threshold standards or above, they will retain their Research Active status.

If an Academic Employee is deemed through the annual Performance Planning and Review process not to meet the Research Active minimum threshold standards, the individual will be supported to develop an individual Research plan to achieve, maintain and strive to exceed the

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Research Active minimum threshold standards.

If an Academic Employee does not retain Research Active status, following the annual Performance Planning and Review process, the Head of School/College or Centre Director will review the composition of supervisory panels on which the Employee is active to ensure the provision of effective supervision. As appropriate, the Head of School/College or Centre Director will confirm that no changes are required or amend the panel. Advice will be provided to the Dean (Graduate Research School), as required.

Academic Employees who are not Research Active cannot be added to any new HDR candidate supervisory panels as a Principal Supervisor. They can be added to one or more HDR supervisory panels as an Associate Supervisor.

Academic Employees who are Early Career Academics will be deemed Research Active for the first three-year period post award of their HDR program.

4.2.4 New Academic Employees

All level A and B Academic Employees, and Early Career Academics, will be deemed Research Active for the first three-year period of their appointment with the University.

It is expected that new Academic Employees at level C and above will meet the minimum Research Active threshold standards from the commencement of their employment with the University.

4.2.5 Career interruptions

In assessing Research Active status, career interruptions may be considered in accordance with the eligible career interruptions set out in the Australian Research Council's Eligibility and Career Interruptions Statement, such as approved parental leave. Where an Academic Employee has experienced an eligible career interruption, they may apply for an exemption through the University's human resources management system.

Each period of career interruption must be:

1. significant and not overlapping;
2. for a period of greater than one month; and
3. approved by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) through the exemption application process.

Upon returning to the University following a career interruption, Academic Employees are encouraged to work with their supervisor to develop an individual Research plan to maintain the Research Active minimum threshold standards.

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For Academic Employees whose full-time equivalent (FTE) is less than 0.5 FTE in the five-year assessment period due to career interruption, additional Research Output data may be considered. Please note that this is at the discretion of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation), as per Section 4.2.6.

4.2.6 Exceptional circumstances

In cases of exceptional circumstances, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) may consider a new or existing Academic Employee for Research Active status on a case-by-case basis.

4.3 Grievances

An Employee who is dissatisfied with a Decision in relation to their Research Active status should escalate their complaint to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research) for review.

5 References

Nil.

6 Schedules

This procedure must be read in conjunction with its subordinate schedules as provided in the table below.

7 Procedure Information

Accountable Officer	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Research)
Responsible Officer	Chief People Officer
Policy Type	University Procedure
Policy Suite	Research Policy
Subordinate Schedules	
Approved Date	2/1/2026
Effective Date	2/1/2026
Review Date	15/12/2027
Relevant Legislation	Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research, 2018

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	Commonwealth scholarships Guidelines (Research) 2017 *Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act 2000* Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 *Higher Education Support Act 2003* *Information Privacy Act 2009* National Code of Practice for Providers of education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
Policy Exceptions	Policy Exceptions Register
Related Policies	Code of Conduct Policy Employee Complaints Policy Intellectual Property Policy Learning and Teaching Policy Research Code of Conduct Policy
Related Procedures	Authorship Procedure Commercialisation of Intellectual Property Procedure Higher Degree by Research Supervision Procedure Higher Doctorates Procedure Human Research Ethics Procedure Intellectual Property Procedure Research Code of Conduct: Management of Potential Breaches Procedure Research Data and Primary Materials Management Procedure Research Structures Procedure Visiting Academic, Adjunct and Honorary Titles Procedure
Related forms, publications and websites	Australian Research Council Eligibility and Career Interruptions Statement

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	Graduate Research School UniSQ Academic Employee Expectations Framework UniSQ Research UniSQ Research Plan UniSQ Strategic Plan
Definitions	**Terms defined in the Definitions Dictionary**
	Academic Employee As defined in the University of So u thern Queensland Enterprise Agreement 2023 - 2026 . Decision A determination made by an Employee, contractor or other authorised delegate in the course of their duties on behalf of the University. Early Career Academic An Early Career Academic, also referred to as Early Career Researcher, has been conferred their PhD within the past five years. This period can be extended by taking into consideration eligible Career Interruptions. Employee A person employed by the University and whose conditions of employment are covered by the Enterprise Agreement and includes persons employed on a continuing, fixed term or casual basis. Employees also include senior Employees whose conditions of employment are covered by a written agreement or contract with the University. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) A Research Doctorate or Research Masters program for which at least two-thirds of the Student load for the program is required as research work. Higher Degree by Research (HDR) Student A Student enrolled in an HDR program. Principal Investigator

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	The lead Researcher for a Research project. The Principal Investigator may also be referred to as the chief, lead or principal Researcher or investigator. Procedure An operational instruction that sets out the process to operationalise a Policy. Research Research is the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings. This could include the synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it is new and creative. Research Active A "Research Active" individual pursues ongoing Research as a major focus of their academic activity. Research Output An output is an outcome of research and can take many forms. Research Outputs must meet the definition of Research. University The term 'University' or 'UniSQ' means the University of Southern Queensland.
	Definitions that relate to this procedure only
Keywords	
Record No	22/328PL

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