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Good Practice Framework for Research Training in Australia

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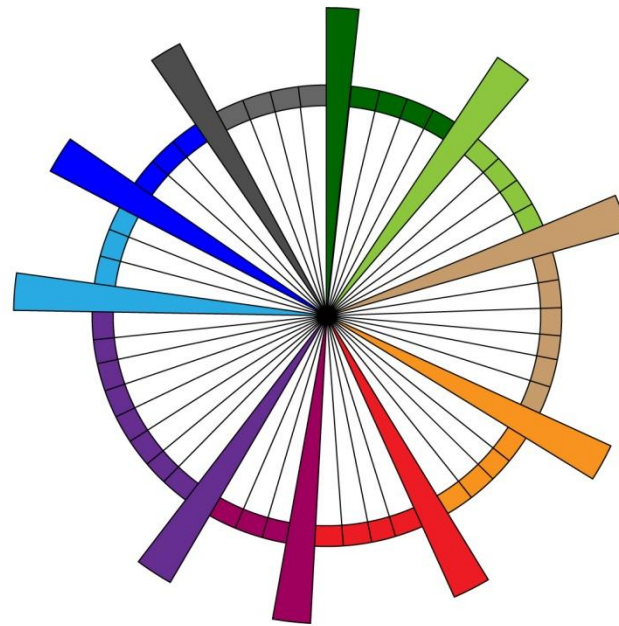
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Good Practice Framework for Research Training in Australia



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Trish Wolski

Outline

- Background
- Why is the framework important?
- Rationale
- The Framework
- Quality and Performance
- Gap Analysis
- How can the framework be used?
- Q&A



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Background

- Office of Learning and Teaching (OLT) Project awarded in 2011 to develop:
 - **Good Practice Framework for Research Training in Australia**
- Driven and approved by the Deans and Directors of Graduate Studies (DDOGS) and an expert reference group
- Once complete, Edith Cowan University will implement as an exemplar

Not another framework!



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Why is it important?

- Wide variation in HDR policies and procedures that govern research training in different institutions
- The Framework provides alignment to:
 - DIISRTE
 - TEQSA and Standards Panel
 - Compacts
 - My University website

Rationale

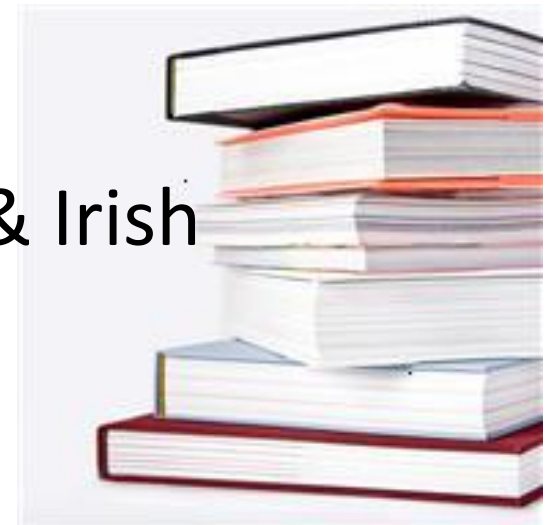
- Aims to develop a Good Practice Framework that will promote quality in research training
- Outlines key processes and measures important for HDR candidate research journey
- Developed by sharing best practice principles, processes and indicators in Australia, and informed by research training best practice in other countries

Key Participants

- DDOGS
- Project Leader – Professor Joe Luca
- Project Manager – Ms Trish Wolski
- Project Support – Professor Barbara Evans, Dr Sara Booth, Mr Nigel Palmer
- Expert reference group (national and International)
- Champions – DDOGS x 10
- Reviewers
- External Evaluator – Dr Margaret Kiley

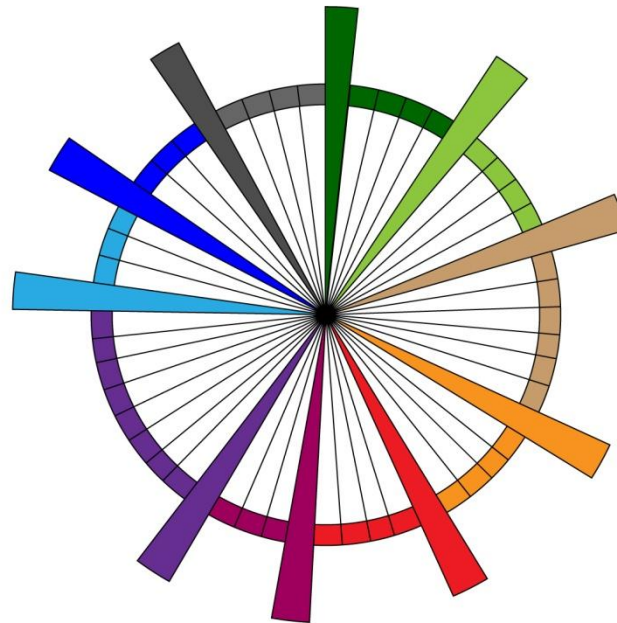
References

- DDOGS Framework for Best Practice
- The Research Education Experience (CAPA)
- Measuring Quality in Higher Education by Research Training (Go8)
- CGS Global Summits
- UK Quality Assurance Agency & Irish Guidelines
- Other...



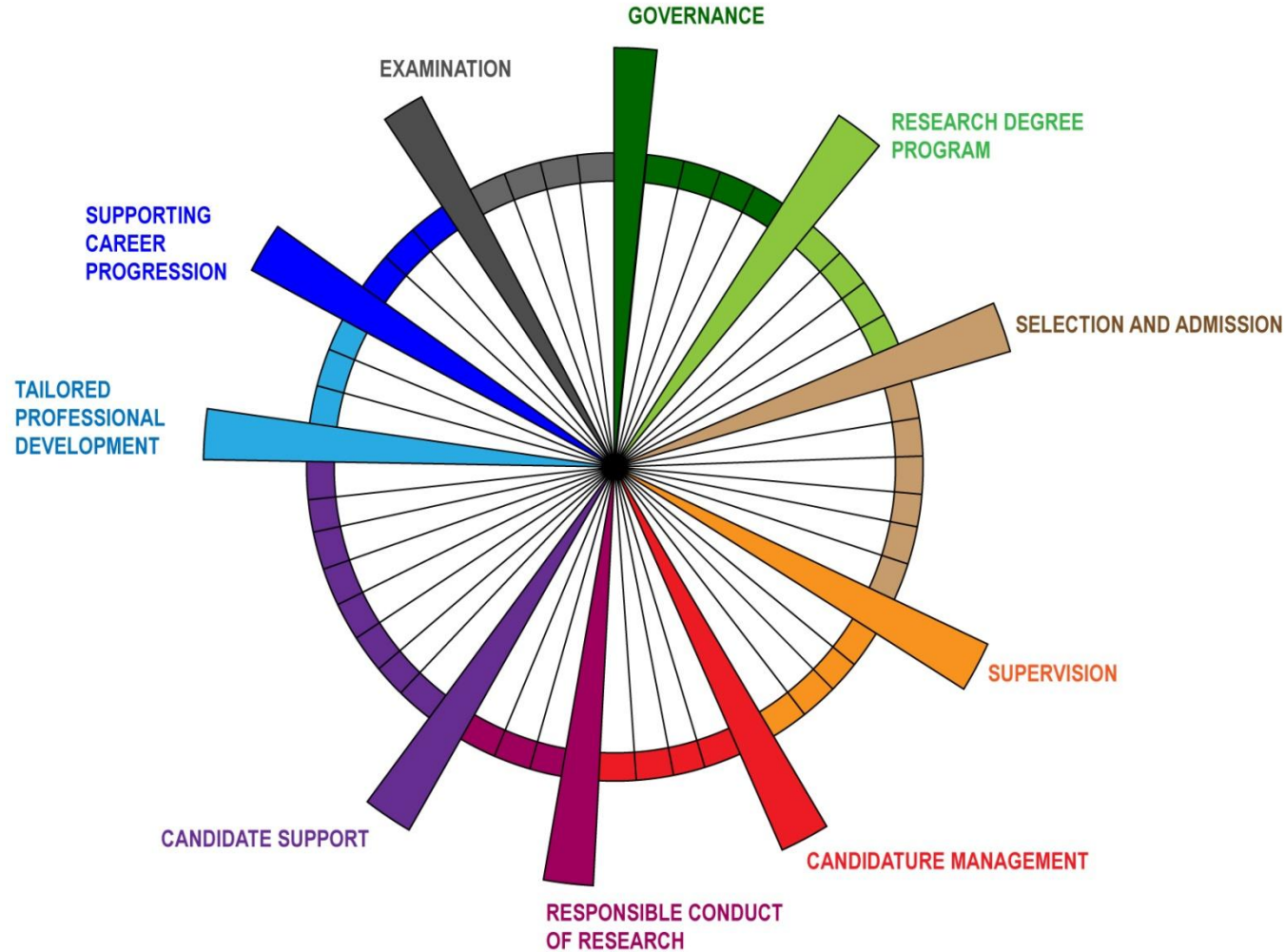
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Good Practice Framework



‘Steering us in the right direction towards
research training quality’

Dimensions



GPF Framework Structure

1. National GPF Guidelines

- **Dimensions** -The Dimensions are key themes identified by DDOGS, reference group and key stakeholders as being critical high-level aspects of HDR programs in Australian universities
- **Components** – Sub-themes in each dimension that exemplify good policies and practices that promote research-training excellence.

2. Institutional Framework Alignment (Quality Assurance)

Good Practice Framework

National Good Practice Framework Guidelines		Institutional Framework Alignment
DIMENSIONS	COMPONENTS	QUALITY ASSURANCE
1. GOVERNANCE The university has an efficient and effective governance framework and related policies, which assure and enhance the quality of postgraduate research programs. ----- External Reference Points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DDoGS Best Practice Guidelines • Provider Registration Standards - Corporate and academic governance • Australian Code for Responsible Conduct of Research 	1.1 University HDR Committees The university has a central committee with defined terms of reference, which oversees policies and procedures for HDR candidates and which reports to a higher university governing body. The university HDR Committee is responsible for the introduction of any new HDR programs and the amendment of regulations for current HDR programs. This committee ensures that the university adheres to state and Commonwealth legislation and HDR standards, including the ESOS Act, Disability Discrimination Act and TEQSA and LAAP requirements.	The university conducts regular reviews of the outcomes of policy implementation by HDR committees. The reviews are communicated appropriately and any necessary changes implemented.
	1.2 HDR Candidate Representation The university has procedures for HDR candidate representation on HDR committee(s) that are transparent, robust, consistently applied and publicised. Candidates from the postgraduate community of the university are formal members of decision-making HDR committee(s).	The university has and adheres to a policy for HDR candidate representation on HDR committees.
	1.3 HDR Policies Policies for managing HDR candidates are accessible, explicit, equitable, transparent and clearly communicated.	University HDR policies are approved and revised by appropriate committees and regular compliance audits are carried out.
	1.4 Grievance Procedures and Appeals The university has explicit, clearly communicated and accessible processes for managing grievances and appeals, and ensures independent and formal procedures that follow principles of natural justice are implemented to effectively resolve HDR complaints.	The university has clearly documented policies and robust procedures for resolving HDR grievances. The Policy and procedures are made transparent on the university's website and accessible in various other mediums for candidate, supervisor and staff

1. Governance

Components include:

1.1 HDR Committee

A central HDR committee defined by terms of reference, which oversees policies and procedures for HDR candidates and which reports to a higher governing body within the institution.

The HDR Committee is responsible for the introduction of any new HDR programs and the amendment of regulations for current HDR programs.

This committee responsibility for HDR compliance matters, reporting against internal and external reference points where appropriate.

1.2 HDR Policies

HDR policies are accessible, explicit, equitable, transparent and clearly communicated.

1.3 HDR Candidate Representation

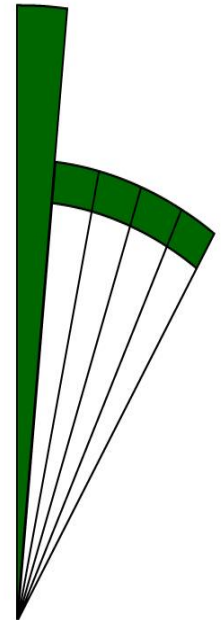
Procedures for HDR candidate representation on HDR committee(s) that are fair, transparent, consistently applied and publicised.

Full membership of decision-making HDR committee(s) is made available for candidates from the postgraduate community.

1.4 Grievance Procedures and Appeals

Explicit, clearly communicated and accessible processes for grievances and appeals.

HDR complaints, grievances and appeals are addressed through formal procedures in a timely manner following principles of natural justice.



8. Tailored Professional Development

Components include:

8.1 Professional Skill Development

Research candidates have opportunities to develop professional and transferable skills during their research program that are relevant to individual needs and career aspirations.

These opportunities are widely promoted and may be offered by research centres/ laboratories, schools, faculties or by central units. A Formal recognition of the successful completion is available, for example, in portfolio format or as certificates to HDR candidates.

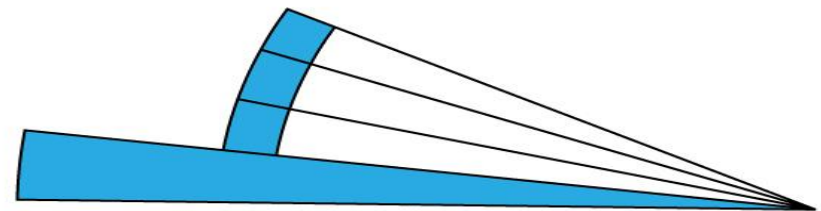
The quality and effectiveness of these programs are regularly monitored and evaluated.

8.2 Interdisciplinary Awareness

HDR candidates have exposure to a variety of interdisciplinary fora that will enrich and extend their research training experience beyond their discipline.

8.3 Mobility and International Awareness

Candidates are encouraged to engage with and experience different cultures and environments through collaborative partnerships formal or informal cotutelles and/or academic travel.



Institutional Framework Alignment - Quality Assurance



Processes and measures, including university reports and surveys, DDoGS Best Practice Guidelines and other mechanisms used by universities to align with the Dimensions/Components

Institutional Framework Alignment - Quality Assurance

In developing the QA for the Good Practice Framework these were some of the questions considered

- What processes and mechanisms can be used to collect data?
- How easy is it to collect data? Is it accurate?
- What reporting already occurs and where are the gaps?

Gap Analysis

Dimensions and Components (2)	Person(s) responsible (delegated responsibility)	Does ECU meet the Quality Assurance measure of the BPF (Yes, No, Under consideration)	Evidence of Institutional Alignment (Quality Assurance)	Gaps/Opportunities for improvement (actions in place)
Example: 2. Research Degree Program				
2.2 Tailored Coursework and Research Training Skills Consider and address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are annual reports based on coursework, research training outcomes and student satisfaction prepared and reported to the appropriate committee?; and Have any changes been implemented as a result of these reports? 	DVC (Research) Associate Deans	No, but No		Creating a new policy for 2013 or new coursework program waiting for approval
Example: 4. Supervision				
4.3 Supervisor Eligibility Consider and address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Is there a regular review of supervisor capacity in different programs? Does the university have a system for recoding supervisor eligibility? 	DVC (Research) Associate Deans	No, but Yes	Have the metric but do not conduct a regular review. ECU has a supervisor register. Version 2 of the Register is under development	

Discussion

The Good Practice Framework is the DDoGS proposal for improving quality in research training.

Where do you see the gaps in Quality in Research Training at ECU?

How do you see the GPF working at ECU?

- Identifying gaps, or areas that could be developed or improved?
- Benchmarking specific dimensions with other national or international institutions?
- Providing candidates with clear information and milestones of their research journey
- Identifying key themes for workshops, conferences and areas for improvement/good practice
- Other??

Questions & Discussion?

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