



higher education & training

Department:
Higher Education and Training
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Directorate: Universities Policy and Development Support

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Policy and Procedures for the Measurement of Research Output of Public Higher Education Institutions

1. Introduction

Compliments of the new season, the Department hopes you had a great holiday and you are well rested for another round of Research Outputs. As you are aware, this communiqué is part of the series aimed at assisting universities in the preparation of their submission of research output publications to the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET).

The Department requests all Research Offices to submit their 2011 research output publications on or before 15 May 2012. This will give us sufficient time to assess the submissions and to request additional information where necessary. The main purpose of this communiqué is to outline problems encountered in the submissions of research output publications to the Department in 2011. We hope that we can all work together to make the 2012 process as smooth as possible.

We are currently experiencing some delays with the release of the 2011 Ministerial Research Output Report to Institutions and we request your patience and understanding in this regard.

2. Recurring Problems

a. Journals

On journals submissions, no major problems were encountered except the following:

- Some institutions made use of the incorrect journal names,
- Incorrect ISSN numbers ,and
- Not using the correct spreadsheets provided by the Department to submit , and
- Incorrect method of calculating author proportion and units claimed.

Furthermore, a few institutions continue to refer to the incorrect journals lists. In order for the Department to be able to update the list of accredited South African journals we rely entirely on the notifications from editors, research offices and academics. We urge you to continue to inform us, so that we can keep the list updated.

b. Books and Published Conference Proceedings

On books and published conference proceedings submissions, the following were the main problems that were encountered:

- There were major errors with the capturing on the spreadsheet which have been discussed in previous communiqués.
- Many submissions lacked sufficient evidence of the peer review process. Please remember that the Department requires details of the peer review process and not only a statement referring to peer review or thanking reviewers.
- Some author affiliations and explanations of late submissions were not confirmed by the DVC/Dean or Director of Research.
- Some institutions did not submit supporting documentation such as details of new research on second or late editions of books. We have had to request this information in the past, it would be good and efficient if institutions could provide this information in their submissions.
- We would like to request all institutions to make use of the first three columns of the spreadsheet, fill in if there is peer review and type of peer review.

Please note that we will no longer fix spreadsheets on behalf of institutions. Incomplete spreadsheets or those that do not comply with the requirements as communicated will therefore be returned to institutions for attention.

If the information system used by the institutions to capture research output publications differs from the Departmental spreadsheets, then it is the responsibility of the research offices to import the information to the spreadsheets format provided by the Department and check for mistakes that may occur during importing. Furthermore, some institutions did not use 2008 CESM Categories document when classifying research output publications by field of study. The document contains 20 CESM categories.

4. Changes on the Spreadsheets

The Department has added a column for **Volume** and **Issue** numbers after the column for the date of publication on the spreadsheet for journals. The institutions have proposed that the Department must give subsidy to journal articles published before the removal of journals from the list of accredited journals. The Department will accept such journal

articles as long as there will be evidence of acceptance of the articles by the time the journal was listed. There will be no changes on the spreadsheets for books and published conference proceedings.

5. New developments for 2011 publications

At the meeting held on 9 November 2011, the evaluation panel made a decision that the following changes would be introduced starting with the 2012 submissions:

- A list of conferences that are constantly approved has been developed and conferences that appear on this list will now be treated the same as accredited journals. Publications from these conferences will automatically get accepted and will not be evaluated by the panel (please see the list attached). More information about the continuity of this list will come once the improvements to the policy have been finalised.
- Reputable publishers list is being developed and will be introduced to institutions shortly. When this list is implemented all book publications from these publishers will not be required to provide evidence of peer review. They will be sent to the panel and will be assessed on the scholarliness only.
- Submissions that do not form part of the above will be subjected to the usual route of evaluation, with the same supporting documents.

6. Conclusion

Please continue to contact the Directorate should you have any problems or queries when completing your submissions. We are happy to help wherever we can. We also welcome your feedback and suggestions on various aspects of our work. If academics need any assistance, please ensure that the Research Office is their first place of contact, rather than the Department. In this way any internal issues can be dealt with before they come to the Department.

The Directorate: Universities Policy & Development Support wishes you all the best for 2012. Please remember to refer to all the previous Communiqués so as to ensure that your submission meets the policy requirements. Please direct all enquiries to:

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