

Scholarship and Scholarly Practice Framework

1. Introduction

As a higher education provider, the Institution is committed to equipping its academic leaders, educators and supervisors with the capabilities required to deliver high quality and industry-relevant education. This includes ongoing engagement in scholarship, research and professional practice that informs course design, reflects contemporary developments in the discipline or field, and ensures that teaching, learning and assessment practices are innovative and responsive to diverse delivery modes and student needs.

The Institution's Strategic Plan 2024 – 2026, developed through a consultative process, sets out a bold vision to become 'Australia's leading industry-focused University College'. University College is a specific higher education provider category under subsection B1(2) of the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021. It requires providers to demonstrate systematic support for scholarship and evidence of scholarly activities that inform teaching, learning, and professional practice, while contributing to the advancement and dissemination of knowledge (TEQSA, 2021, p.20).

The Scholarship and Scholarly Practice Framework (Framework') has been developed to foster a strong culture of scholarship that supports this vision.

The Framework builds on and replaces the 2019 'Framework for Scholarship of Learning and Teaching at ICMS', aligning with University College standards and guiding the implementation of scholarship related strategies and objectives across the Institution.

2. Scope and Objective

The Framework applies to all staff engaged in academic leadership and course delivery, regardless of their contractual arrangements with the Institution. It serves as a guide for scholarship related policies, procedures and decisions made by the Associate Dean (Scholarship) and the governance body, the Scholarly Practice Committee¹. The primary objective is to provide a systematic and sustainable approach to scholarly activity that aligns with the Institution's vision. It supports academic staff in their scholarly pursuits and ensures that scholarship remains a cornerstone of quality education and continuous improvement.

Figure 1 illustrates the role of the framework at the Institution for academic governance and quality assurance with key scholarship policy and procedures including:

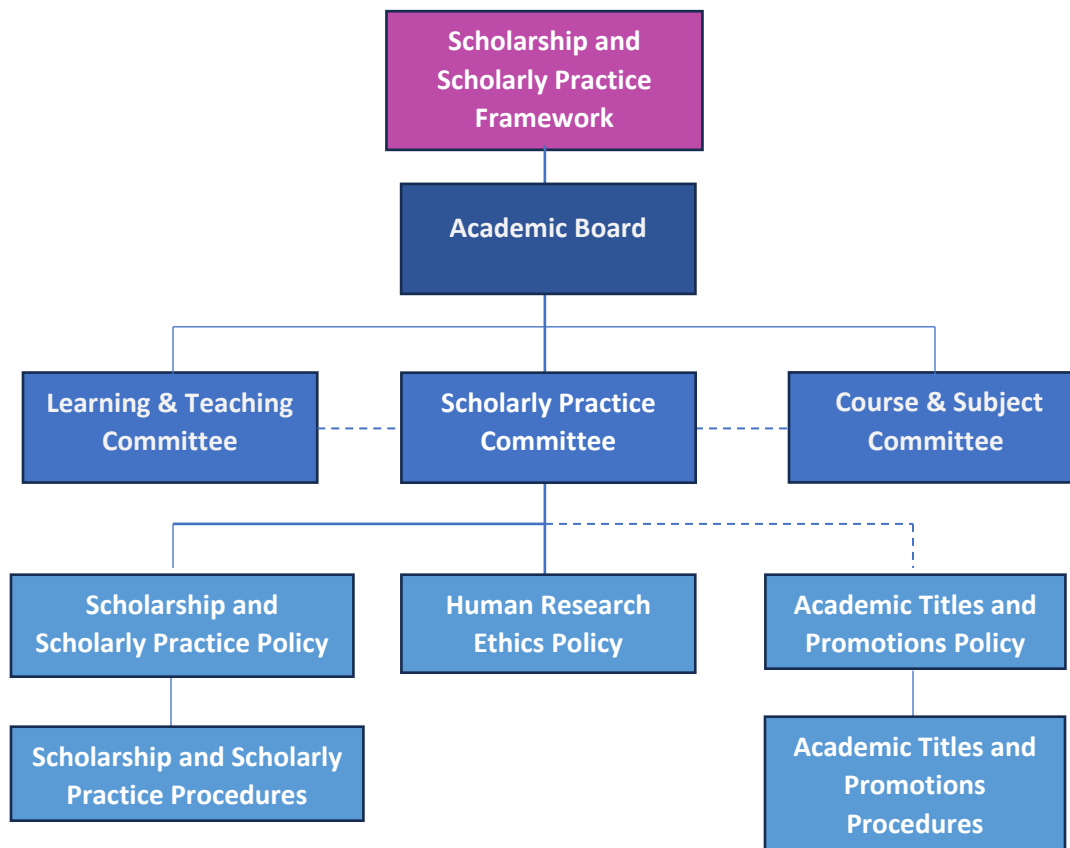
¹ The Scholarly Practice Committee reports to the Academic Board. Its terms of reference are in the Institution's Governance Charter.

- Scholarship and Scholarly Practice Policy and Procedures
- Human Research Ethics Policy, and
- Academic Titles and Promotions Policy and Procedures

Scholarship ultimately benefits students, the academia, industry and the community.

The Framework begins with defining the way scholarly outputs are categorised and assessed for quality and impact. It then outlines a three-pillar strategy that addresses TEQSA's University College requirements for scholarship.

Figure 1. The role of the Scholarship and Scholarly Practice Framework at the Institution



3. Scholarship Definition and Categorisations

The Institution defines 'scholarship' as activities or outputs aimed at gaining new knowledge or contributing to advancement of knowledge or professional practice in a field, and disseminating advances through contemporary teaching and learning that benefit students, industry and communities.

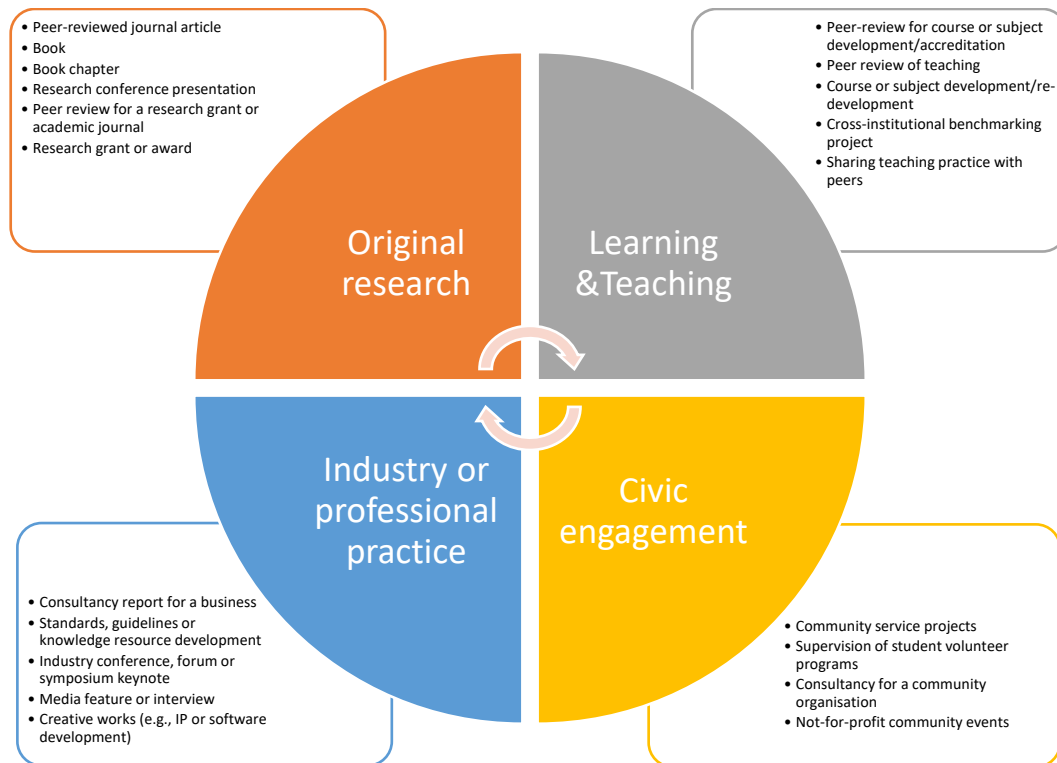
The term 'scholarly practice' refers to "*established patterns and emerging practices of knowledge building*" (Williams et al., 2013, p. 7).

There are four categories of scholarship at the Institution (Figure 2):

- **Original research** is in or relevant to the discipline area/s that the staff member teaches at the Institution, which include business and management, tourism, event and hospitality, and information technology. The output or activity can be in the form of a journal article, book, book chapter, research conference presentation and external peer-review of research.
- **Learning and teaching** informs scholarly learning and teaching practices, including but not limited to innovative curriculum and assessment design, student engagement, and academic integrity. The output or activity can be in the form of course or subject review and development, benchmarking project, peer-review of teaching, and teaching practice shared with peers.
- **Industry or professional practice** is directly related to the discipline areas at the Institution. It is particularly pertinent to the Institution's industry-focused strategy. The output or activity can be in the form of a consultancy report for a business, standard, guideline or knowledge resource development, conference or symposium keynote, industry publication, and media feature or interview.
- **Civic engagement** involves conducting scholarship to address social and community-defined challenges, generate knowledge and inform community action and policy. The output or activity can be in the form of a consultancy for a not-for-profit organisation, a community service project, supervision of student volunteer programs or not-for-profit/charity community events.

Staff members are required to record their scholarly output or activity based on this categorisation in the Scholarly Output and Activity Register (SOAR), available in the Institution's human resources software, ELMO.

Figure 2. The four categories of scholarship at the Institution and examples of output and activity types



4. Quality of Scholarship

The Institution believes good scholarship is both rigorous and impactful. Impact is “the good that [scholars] can do in the world” or simply “benefit” (Reed, 2018, p. 13). The Institution recognises that, beyond academia, scholarship can create outcomes with positive impact when applied in industry or community.

Impact can be achieved in many different ways, for example, through raising understanding and awareness, influencing attitudes, driving economic, environmental, health and wellbeing improvements, shaping policy and informing other forms of decision-making. It can also be realised through behaviour change, capacity building or enhancing preparedness (Table 1). Furthermore, the scope or reach of the impact of a scholarly outcome can be described as:

- Micro – subject or course level
- Meso – institutional level
- Macro – local industry or community
- Mega – national or international industry, community or disciplinary

Table 1. The nature and significance of impact articulated based on the Research Impact Typology by Reed (2018, pp. 18-19).

| Type of impact | Definition |
|---|--|
| Understanding and awareness | People understand an issue better than they did before, based on your research. |
| Attitudinal | A change in attitudes, typically of a group of people who share similar views, towards a new attitude that brings them or others benefits. |
| Economic | Monetary benefits arising from research, either in terms of money saved, costs avoided or increases in turnover, profit, funding or benefits to groups of people or the environment measured in monetary terms. |
| Environmental | Benefits from research to genetic diversity, species or habitat conservation, and ecosystems, including the benefits that humans derive from a healthy environment. |
| Health and well-being | Research that leads to better outcomes for the health of individuals, social groups or public health, including saving lives and improving people's quality of life, and wider benefits for the well-being of individuals or social groups, including both physical and social aspects such as emotional, psychological and economic well-being, and measures of life satisfaction. |
| Policy | The contribution that research makes to new or amended laws, regulations or other policy mechanisms that enable them to meet a defined need or objective that delivers public benefit. Crucial to this definition is the fact that you are assessing the extent to which your research made a contribution, recognising that it is likely to be one of many factors influencing policy. It also goes beyond simply influencing policy, to enabling those policies to deliver public benefits. If the policy intervention would have had the same impact without the elements based on your research, can you really claim to have had impact? Contribution is therefore an essential part of demonstrating that your research achieved policy impacts. |
| Other forms of decision-making and behaviour change impacts | Whether directly or indirectly (via changes in understanding/awareness and attitudes), research can inform a wide range of individual, group and organisational behaviours and decisions leading to impacts that go beyond the economy, environment, health and well-being or policy. |
| Cultural | Changes in the prevailing values, attitudes, beliefs, discourse and patterns of behaviour, whether explicit (e.g. codified in rules or law) or implicit (e.g. rules of thumb or accepted practices) in organisations, social groups or society that deliver benefits to the members of those groups or those they interact with. |
| Other social | Benefits to specific social groups or society not covered by other types of impact, including, for example, access to education or improvements in human rights. |
| Capacity or preparedness | Research that leads to new or enhanced capacity (physical, financial, natural, human resources or social capital and connectivity) that is likely to lead to future benefits, or that makes individuals, groups or organisations more prepared and better able to cope with changes that might otherwise impact negatively on them. |

The impact descriptors and typology above are applied in SOAR to help articulate the scope, nature and significance of impact from scholarly outputs and activities.

To ensure scholarly rigour, the Institution has adopted Glassick's (2000, p. 879) six standards for evaluating academic work. These standards are:

1. Clear goals: The scholar addresses clear and important questions in the field.
2. Adequate preparation: The scholar shows an understanding of existing scholarship in the field and brings together the necessary skills and resources to move the project forward.
3. Appropriate methods: A fit-for-purpose and ethical method is applied effectively.
4. Significant results: The work adds consequentially to the field and opens additional areas for further exploration.
5. Effective presentation: Appropriate forums are used to communicate to the intended audiences; the work is accessible by other scholars for future studies and/or critique.
6. Reflective critique: The scholar critically evaluates their own work and brings an appropriate breadth of evidence to the critique.

These standards, among others, are used by the Scholarly Practice Committee to adjudicate internal grant and award applications. They should also be applied by academic staff whenever they undertake scholarly work.

5. The Three-Pillar Strategy

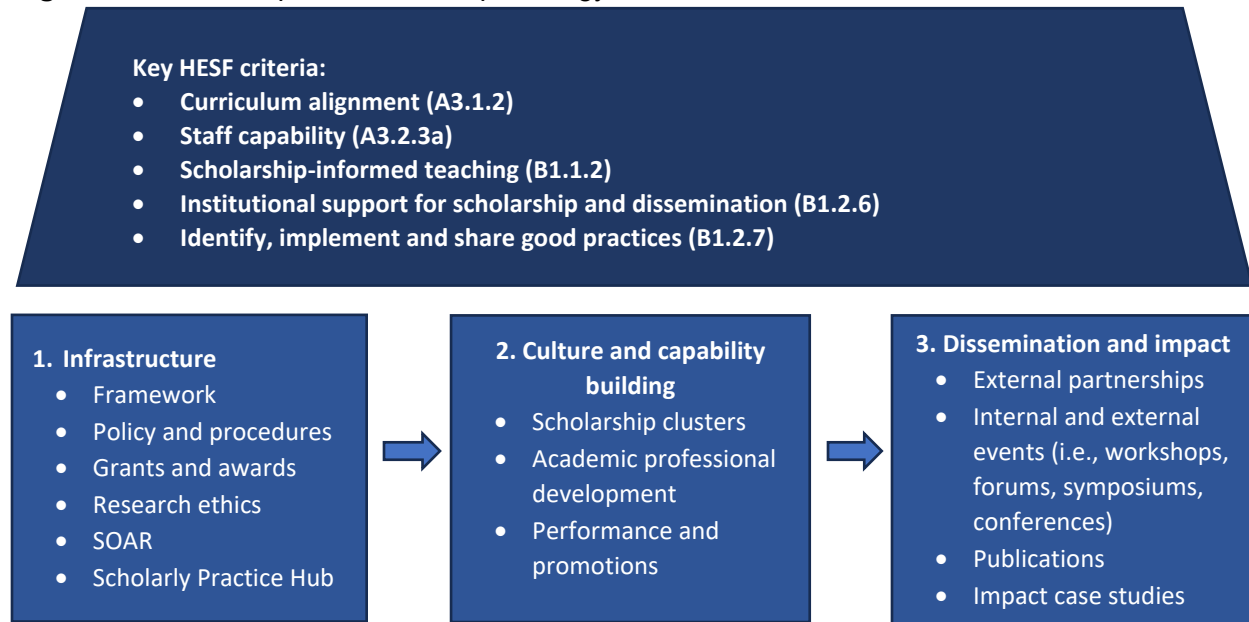
The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021 specify a number of standards (Part A) and performance criteria (Part B) pertaining to scholarship (TEQSA, 2021):

- A3.1.2 The content and learning activities of each course of study engage with advanced knowledge and inquiry consistent with the level of study and the expected learning outcomes.
- A3.2.3a Staff with responsibilities for academic oversight and those with teaching and supervisory roles in courses or units of study are equipped for their roles, including having knowledge of contemporary developments in the discipline or field, which is informed by continuing scholarship or research or advances in practice.
- B1.1.2 (Institute of Higher Education): Academic and teaching staff are active in scholarship that informs their teaching.
- B1.2.6 (University College): Demonstrate systematic support for scholarship and demonstrates scholarly activities and outcomes that inform teaching, learning and professional practice, and make a contribution to the advancement and dissemination of knowledge.
- B1.2.7 (University College): Identify and implement good practices and advances in teaching and learning, and share those practices with the higher education sector more broadly.

To address these requirements using a systematic approach (TEQSA, 2022), the Institution employs a 'three-pillar' strategy. While the pillars are interrelated, they are implemented in a

largely sequential manner. Pillar One establishes the foundational conditions necessary for Pillar Two to operate effectively. In turn, Pillar Three depends on the structures and outcomes established through Pillar Two. (Figure 3).

Figure 3. The three-pillar scholarship strategy.



5.1 Pillar One: Infrastructure

The infrastructure pillar predominantly addresses the systematic support requirement. It puts systems and processes in place to facilitate scholarship for staff. It entails:

- Providing strategic directions.
- Grants and awards to make undertaking scholarly projects and activities more encouraging and feasible (e.g., scholarship grants scholarship and learning and teaching excellence awards).
- A Human Research Ethics Advisory Panel (HREAP) to review and approve lower risk research projects.
- A Scholarly Output and Activity Register (SOAR) to capture and report on outputs and activities. These reports enable the Institution to monitor progress, evaluate impact and identify opportunities for continuous improvement in scholarly practice.
- An internal scholarship information hub (i.e., Scholarly Practice Hub) providing academic staff with access to resources, guidance and support related to scholarly activities. It also facilitates collaboration and project development among staff. Hosted on the Institution's Learning Management System (LMS), Moodle, the Hub is a central space for sharing information, fostering scholarly engagement, and building academic community.

5.2 Pillar Two: Culture and Capability Building

While Pillar One provides the hardware of systematic support, such as systems and processes, Pillar Two is about the software, in other words the culture and staff's capability.

The academic staff at the Institution are diverse in their industry experience and discipline expertise with some more research-focused than the others. This presents an opportunity for academic staff to complement each other in skills and experience through interdisciplinary scholarly activities or research.

To facilitate interdisciplinary collaboration between disciplines, the Institution has established 'scholarship clusters' where staff can exchange ideas, share resources and good practices, identify problems, and support each other to develop scholarly projects to find and implement innovative solutions. Through time, scholarship clusters cultivate a culture of continuous improvement and rigorous enquiries that are impactful. Scholarship clusters can evolve and develop sub-clusters according to changes in socio-economic, environmental, health, political and technological trends, and needs of the institution, its stakeholders and communities.

In addition to the scholarship clusters, capability building can also be facilitated by individual performance goal setting, performance appraisals and career progression through promotions. The Academic Titles and Promotions Policy and Procedures set out the key criteria for promotions as well as the types of evidence one needs to demonstrate to advance to the next academic level and/or roles.

Academic staff should set their performance goals at their annual performance appraisal and identify any skills or evidence gaps to achieve their career objectives. The Academic Staff Professional and Scholarly Development Guidelines provide a matrix for academic staff to develop a professional and scholarship development plan as part of their performance appraisal. Academic managers play a key role in supporting this capability building and the Institution resourcing.

5.3 Pillar Three: Dissemination and Impact

The third pillar addresses the dissemination of knowledge requirement. In addition to traditional dissemination channels, such as academic or industry journals, conferences, forums and media, scholarly outputs may also be disseminated internally through presentations or workshops at scholarship cluster meetings, faculty forums and symposiums. Furthermore, dissemination may occur via the Institution's digital platforms, including the *Scholarly Impact* publication, the news channel on the ICMS website and its official social media networks. To capture the benefits and reach of scholarly work, the Institution will collect evidence and narratives of impact in the form of case studies, which will be reported annually. The impact will be articulated using the typology in Table 1, with input from stakeholders who have directly benefited from the scholarly activities.

6. Governance

The implementation of this strategic framework requires regular monitoring, reporting and review by the Associate Dean (Scholarship) and Scholarly Practice Committee based on set key performance indicators. Those indicators may include the proportion of academic staff who are scholarly active, utilisation of grants and awards, support for professional development, breadth and quality of scholarly outputs and activities and their growth, and evidence of impact.

The Academic Board is responsible for providing oversight and monitoring of progress.

7. Conclusion

Establishing a strong culture of scholarship is a long-term endeavor. Its development and growth requires integration into the Institution's structures, practices and core values. As a result, the success of the three-pillar strategy depends heavily on sustained commitment from *all* academic staff. Such commitment should not be solely driven by *institutional* ambition, but all academic staff and their intrinsic motivation and values to make a positive impact with their scholarly work. That is the key to a sustainable and impactful scholarship strategy.

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