Introduction:
- Two ERA indicator documents and the Draft ERA Submission Guidelines and Draft Technical Specifications for ERA were released in late December and late January.
- These apply to the first round of ERA, which involves assessment of discipline clusters 1 and 2 – Physical, Chemical and Earth Sciences (PCE) and the Humanities and Creative Arts (HCA). HCA also includes Law.
- The latter two ERA documents are not the final specifications, but the four documents do give an indication of what data will be required, and of the submission process.
- A number of issues remain unclear, including the processes and criteria of Research Evaluation Committees (RECs). UWA is seeking clarification on these as well as providing feedback to ARC on points of debate.

Timeframe:
- The final date for submission is 8 May 2009, but there are multiple stages in the submission process. The University's submission should be completed by 20 April to be ready for loading into the ERA IT systems.
- This is a very tight schedule, and getting the University's submission complete and accurate will be difficult.
- After 11 May, the ARC will commence the evaluation process, scheduled to continue until the end of July. The publication of the outcomes of the ERA is scheduled to be released on 14 August.

Indicators summary:
- Ranked outlets (e.g. journals, refereed conference publications for some clusters)
- Citation analysis for PCE cluster (e.g. relative citation impact, publication centile distribution)
- Peer review for HCA of 20% sample
- Total research publications (HERDC categories plus others for HCA)
- FTE and headcount of eligible researchers
- HERDC research income categories 1-4
- Esteem (e.g. editorial roles, prestigious awards, fellowship of Learned Academics)
- Applied (e.g. patents, registered designs, research commercialisation income)

Ongoing tasks:
- Determine eligible staff at UWA on 31/03/08 (mainly employed staff plus honorary/visiting staff with UWA byline)
- Assign FoRs (Fields of Research) to each eligible staff member.
- Collect and FoR tag esteem data from eligible staff.
- FoR tag eligible 2002-07 research output data. For both PCE and HCA, eligible research output is the four HERDC outputs: Books; Book Chapters; Refereed Journal Articles; and, Refereed Conference Proceedings (full papers), plus other categories for HCA (below). Some data may still need to be collected, e.g. from honorary, adjunct, clinical staff.
- Collect and FoR tag HCA outputs not already in central database. HCA includes: Original (Creative) Works in the Public Domain; Live Performance Works in the Public Domain; Recorded (Performance) Public Works; and, Curated or Produced Substantial Public Exhibitions, Events, or Renderings.
- Institutions are required to nominate the top 20% of HCA publications for peer review, as there will be no citation assessment of HCA outputs. There will be evaluation by journal tier. The University is required to provide access to these publications (and supporting documentation up to 250 words) through digital repositories.
- Establish the institutional repository in the Library.
- FoR tag 2005-07 research income. The 2005-2006 data needs to be disaggregated into the required categories.
- Collect and FoR tag applied measures (patents, registered designs, and research commercialisation income).
- Collect background statements (approx. 5 pages per 2-digit FoR), outlining the research capabilities, focuss, and environments of each discipline in both clusters.
- Decide on optional ‘research theme’ tags and ‘institutional unit’ tags for research outputs. This would require extra work, but may prove valuable in the future.

Submission:
- All data is to be submitted as XML files in the ERA system SEER. This will require transforming the data in its current formats into the stipulated XML schemas (detailed in the Technology Pack).
- Once the data is uploaded into SEER and checked, DVCRI ‘finalises’ the submission (it can no longer be modified), then VC ‘certifies’ it. Certification indicates all the data is complete and accurate, and also that it may be used for purposes other than ERA within the ARC and DIISR.
- Guidelines detailing the assessment and decision making processes of RECs have not been released.
- The University is required to provide access to research outputs and supporting documentation, as well as technical support for the repository, for the duration of the evaluation process.

More information:
- For summary of ERA to date see UWA ERA website www.research.uwa.edu.au/era
- For details and documents to date see ARC ERA website www.arc.gov.au/era