



## The Teaching-Research Nexus

A guide for academics and policy-makers  
in higher education

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### Examples from Australian universities

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#### **Maximising the Contributions of Disciplinary Research to Teaching and Learning Environments**

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**Level: (ie, institution/faculty/department/school/program)**

- Institution

**Type of initiative:**

- Policy document changes
- Evaluation

**Brief description of the initiative:**

The development of research institutes and centres continues to be an important ambition for this university, which commenced in 1992 following the amalgamation of teaching colleges and a technology institute. There are an increasing number of research institutes and centres that are well placed now to contribute to the teaching function of this university. Ideally, the researchers at these institutes are able to contribute to curriculum and program design, in order to keep the teaching informed by the current thinking in the discipline. While this is not a formal requirement, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) are encouraging research institutes and centres to be involved in the student learning experience. This move, while benefiting the students who will be learning from leading researchers, will also increase student awareness of the research institutes and centres, and perhaps promote interest in undertaking honours or postgraduate study at these centres. Currently, researchers at these institutes and centres provide guest lectures at the university and may also be involved in summer internships offered to students at some research centres. The DVC (A) and DVC (R&I) believe that it is important to build on these successful initiatives to enable stronger teaching-research links between research active staff at the university and the students.

While researchers who become involved in curriculum or program design may almost automatically address various TRN strategies, such as discussing the latest research in the field or teaching research methods, it is still necessary to make the TRN an explicit requirement in program approval and review. This is reiterated to university academics, both research and teaching focused, that research has a place in student

learning. There is a Program Review Committee that assess applications for new programs and all existing programs offered by the university. Existing programs are reviewed every five years. For both proposed and existing programs, program administrators must complete a template, which explains how the TRN will be addressed in the program. Applicants who fail to complete this part of the template have their program review template returned to them for completion.

The university uses both the program review mechanism and the encouragement of research institutes and centres to contribute to teaching and learning as part of a multi-faceted approach to supporting teaching and research links at this university.

**For further details:**

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