



SYDNEY
Metropolitan
Institute of Technology

Education for Change

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ACADEMIC STAFF SCHOLARSHIP POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

As a registered Australian Institute of Higher Education that delivers and awards higher education courses the Sydney Metropolitan Institute of Technology ('Sydney Met') is committed to providing a learning environment informed by research and scholarship consistent with the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) 2021 to ensure that academic staff have current knowledge of their discipline, and teaching and learning practices are aligned with current, evidence-based, best practice, to build a quality student experience and prepare graduates for the workplaces they will enter. As such, individual staff scholarly activity at Sydney Met is supported by a range of institution-wide practices associated with: academic staff recruitment; workload allocation and annual workload planning; resource allocation; and reporting. This document is aligned with, and informed by the following:

- The [Higher Education Standards Framework 2021](#) (Standard 3.2: Staffing)
- The [TEQSA Guidance Note: Scholarship](#)
- The [National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research](#)
- The [Australian Code for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

2. PURPOSE

This document provides a framework for supporting scholarly activity at Sydney Met to ensure that teaching and learning at Sydney Met is informed by current disciplinary knowledge and innovative teaching and learning practices.

3. SCOPE

This document applies to all academic staff, including permanent (full-time and part-time) and sessional staff.

4. DEFINITION OF SCHOLARSHIP

Sydney Met defines scholarship in accordance with the HESF 2021 as *'those activities concerned with gaining new or improved understanding, or appreciation and insights into a field of knowledge, or engaging with and keeping up to date with advances in the field.'*¹. This includes both advances in knowledge and/or professional practice in a discipline, and conveying contemporary disciplinary knowledge through evidence-based, best practice teaching and learning approaches.

¹ [Guidance Note: Scholarship](#) (version 3.0) TEQSA, 4 May 2022

The Boyer Model of Scholarship² encourages a holistic view of scholarship that values contributions beyond traditional research, and recognises four dimensions:

- The scholarship of discovery: Original/basic research whose primary aim is to advance knowledge.
- The scholarship of integration: Synthesising knowledge across sub-disciplinary, disciplinary and professional boundaries to advance knowledge and practice.
- The scholarship of application: The rigorous application of disciplinary expertise and knowledge to solve real world problems of individuals, society and the professions that connects scholarship with practice
- The scholarship of teaching: Concerned with the study of teaching and learning processes, and the application of current, best-practice approaches that promotes active and critical learning based on advances in a discipline or in knowledge about effective teaching and learning and course design practices in a field. We extend this definition to include:
 - student learning: scholarly inquiry into how students make meaning from what the teacher says and does.
 - engagement: focusing on attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion for learning, and breaking down barriers to greater social inclusion and collaboration in teaching and learning.

The scholarship of teaching extends beyond the expectation that teaching will be current and informed by best practice because it includes a dimension of reporting and/or presentation that allows review and evaluation, and illustrates the importance of the acquisition, integration, and distillation of knowledge into teaching, through both curriculum content and teaching practices/processes.

5. KEY PRINCIPLES

This Framework sets out principles that underpin Sydney Met's policies and procedures to support academic staff scholarly activity and create an environment of quality learning and teaching that fosters engagement with scholarship as a cultural practice. Research and Scholarship at Sydney Met is:

- Aligned to the vision of the institute, as outlined in the strategic plan, of socially responsible, culturally appropriate higher education in Australia, and the agenda of 'Education for Change'.
- Reflective of the three interconnected strategic goals of the institute:
 - Academic quality: Learning and teaching at Sydney met is evidence-based and student-centered and the institute prioritizes research and scholarship that contributes to high quality learning and teaching.
 - Equitable practice: Sydney Met is committed to enhancing social inclusion in higher education and prioritizes research and scholarship that contributes to equity and inclusion.
 - Social Impact: Sydney Met is committed to educating students who can make a difference through activities that have social impact and prioritizes research and scholarship that has a clear social impact.
- Multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary and applied where possible, recognizing the benefits to students of a learning environment where links within and between disciplines are identified and the advantages of synergies and applications across disciplines are evident.

² Boyer, E. L. (1990), *Scholarship reconsidered: Priorities of the professoriate*, Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching

- An expectation of all academic staff and academic leaders so that professional currency in the discipline(s) and in the teaching of these discipline(s) is maintained.
- Understood to include both institutional and individual activities that contribute to the advancement of discipline knowledge, professional practice, and learning and teaching, including through the design and delivery of courses.
- Institutional activities that support research and scholarship at Sydney Met include:
 - The Sydney Met *Workload Model* allocates 20% of academic staff time to non-teaching activities, including research.
 - Providing access to academic journals through online databases;
 - Recruitment of qualified and experienced academic staff;
 - Supporting participation by guest lecturers and guest presenters;
 - The Academic Board Research and Scholarship Committee (RSC) chaired by the Executive Dean established in March 2024. The RSC is required to maintain a register of staff research and scholarship activities, prepare a Research and Scholarship Plan for 2025-2027, prepare the inaugural Sydney Met Research and Scholarship Annual Report for 2024, and oversight a small grant scheme to support scholarly development and conference participation.
 - The Sydney Met *Course Development, Approval, Amendment and Review Policy and Procedure* identifies advances in scholarship of teaching and learning as a rationale for changes to units.
- Individual activities recognised as research and scholarship at Sydney Met include:
 - peer reviewed publications, conference presentations, and delivery of academic and professional seminars/webinars;
 - synthesising and communicating advances in practice through activities such as presentations within and outside the institute;
 - scholarly review of teaching practice and assessments that contribute to course development and review;
 - documented rationale for improvements in teaching practices through, for example, improved pedagogies, innovations in curriculum, teaching and learning activities, and/or learning materials;
 - evidence-based updates to academic policies;
 - recognised contributions to professional bodies, cross-institutional partnerships, and/or communities of practice, for example through the development of new standards, resources, and/or codes of practice;
 - active involvement in academic societies (evidenced by delivering presentations, undertaking leadership roles, or reflecting on/sharing with other staff current topics and issues);
 - contribution to academic journals, other than through publication (e.g., through editorial roles, peer review) and contribution to conferences and related activities, other than through presentation (e.g., through membership of organizing committees, peer review, and related activities);
 - undertaking further study in an area relevant to discipline or to teaching and learning, including enrolling in/completing formal courses of study (such as a higher degree by research or a Graduate Certificate of Higher Education), and short courses selected to maintain or develop specific skills; and/or
 - other activities that fit the definition of scholarship as defined in Section 4.
- Monitored and reported annually to the Academic Board through an Annual Research and Scholarship Report.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR ENACTING THE POLICY

The Academic Board is responsible for determining the institutes' priorities for research and scholarship and for providing approval for and regular oversight of the work of its sub-committee, the Research and Scholarship Committee.

- The Research and Scholarship Committee is responsible for developing the Research and Scholarship Plan, initiating and implementing activities and processes to support the goals of the plan (e.g., through the Sydney Met Small Grants Scheme), and reporting to the Academic Board concerning the outcomes of these initiatives and staff scholarship outcomes.
- Sydney Met management is responsible for supporting an environment that nurtures, recognises and rewards scholarly activity by:
 - implementing processes to support annual workload planning and for recording annual workload plans.
 - Maintaining policies that specify the expectations of academic roles and for using these when recruiting sessional and ongoing staff.
 - Ensuring that resources are available to support staff professional development activities.
- Academic leaders are expected to have advanced knowledge of pedagogy and contemporary developments in their discipline informed by ongoing scholarship, and to apply this knowledge to improve student outcomes through staff mentoring, curriculum review and curriculum development.
- All Sydney Met academic staff are responsible for ensuring that they regularly engage with scholarship as a part of their role.
 - For academic staff with full-time and part-time ongoing appointments, discussion of scholarship and planning for scholarly activities is included in each staff member's annual workload planning and is reviewed regularly across the year.
 - Sessional staff are selected based on current/recent scholarly activity and are supported with staff inductions and monthly webinars that engage them with best-practice and innovative teaching and learning practice.
 - Academic staff who are supported to attend conferences or complete courses are expected to reflect on their experiences and share their learning with other academic staff, focusing on application at Sydney Met.

7. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- *Academic Integrity Policy and Procedure*
- *Academic Staff Qualifications and Professional Experience Equivalency Policy and Procedure*
- *Complaints, Grievances, and Appeals Policy and Procedure*
- *Course Development, Approval, Amendment and Review Policy and Procedure*
- *Staff Code of Conduct*
- *Staff Recruitment Policy and Procedure*
- *Workload Model*