

4 December 2015

Australian university sector shines and Group of Eight further consolidates premier research position

The 'Excellence in Research for Australia' (ERA) results released this morning signal clearly the research depth and capability of Australia's university sector. In this new era of a welcome Government focus on the value of university research, the results are confirmation of the sector's worth to the nation," says Group of Eight (Go8) Chief Executive Vicki Thomson.

Ms Thomson said the sector's rise in world class level research – up to 89% of all assessed - was important as ERA is the basis of all valuations that drive the university's sector's brand health, especially internationally.

"True, we are in the midst of debate over whether ERA alone is what we should continue to judge research funding decisions upon, but currently it is our only available methodology, and tells us the research quality of our university system is truly world class," she said.

"For the Go8 the latest ERA results indicate that 99% of our research is world class or better and importantly nearly half is at ERA level 5, that is, world leading level. The higher the quality of research we produce the better positioned we are to support industry, both here and overseas, drive discovery and innovation and support the reputation of Brand Australia.

"It is also true that industry partners looking to engage in R&D collaborations will seek to do so with those universities which produce the highest quality research.

"In ERA 2015 the Go8 delivered more than half of Australia's world leading research and we also increased our 'well above world standard' research by more than half. We are proud of that fact, and especially because it illustrates yet again that the best can always do better. The Go8 has done just that."

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