

A NATIONAL STUDY FOR AND ABOUT UNIVERSITY RESEARCH SERVICES STAFF

Researcher

Darlene Sebalj
School of Education & SORTI
darlene.sebalj@uon.edu.au
Ph: 02 6253 2381 Fx: 02 49686713

Research Supervisor

Prof Allyson Holbrook
Director, SORTI
Allyson.Holbrook@newcastle.edu.au
Ph: 02 49686710, Fx: 02 49686713

Research is integral to the work of universities and will be crucial to the status of Australian Universities in the future. In order to gain a clear understanding of research in universities, we need to obtain a perspective that recognises the role and contribution of managers and administrators within Research Services sections. This research will build a profile of University Research Services staff, identifying their activities and roles in the context of a change process. It will develop a picture of the change environment in which these staff operate and their relationships with other key stakeholders.

Project Update: 30 August 2011

Key doctoral findings will be presented on September 13 at the ARMS 2011 conference, Dockside, Sydney. The presentation: *A National Study for and About University Research Services Staff* will cover a range of findings specifically addressed through three emerging themes of Gender, Recognition and Service. The conference program details can be found at: <http://www.iceaustralia.com/arms2011/program.html>

Thank you for your continued interest in this research and I hope to see you at the conference!

Conference Presentation

Sebalj, D. (2011). *A National Study For and About University Research Services Staff: Key Doctoral Findings*. Paper presented at the 2011 Annual ARMS Conference, Dockside, Sydney, 13-16 Sept.

Project Update: 3 June 2010

The writing up phase of the research study is now gaining pace after a settling in period from a further interstate relocation. A staff function map been developed from the research findings and is currently being finessed for presentation. At this stage the estimated date of thesis submission is mid 2011. It is currently planned that a presentation on this research be made to the UK 2010 SRHE conference in December of this year. Assuming the paper gets accepted I will advise closer to the time of the details of the proposed conference presentation.

Whilst the completion of this project has been delayed for a variety of reasons, it is amazing how fresh and relevant the perspectives of the respondents continue to be. I look forward to completing this work so that others can be as enriched by the insights provided by the Research Managers and Administrators involved with this research as has been my privilege during the life of this project.

An updated list of conference presentations and publications arising from this study to date are as follows:

Conference Presentations

Sebalj, D. (2009). University Research Administration as a Profession: A Sustainable Notion? Paper presented at the *TEMC 2009* Annual Conference, Darwin, 14-16 Sept 2009.

- Sebalj, D. (2007). Complexity, Compliance and Change. A Study into University Research Services Administration. Paper presented at the *TEMC 2007 Annual Conference*, Canberra. 23-26 Sept.
- Sebalj, D. (2007). A National Study For and About University Research Services Staff – Preliminary Findings. Invited poster presentation at the *ARMS 2007 Annual Conference*, Adelaide, 19-21 Sept.
- Sebalj, D., & Holbrook, A. (2006). Administering PhD Studies. *Proceedings of the Australian Association for Research in Education 2006 Annual Conference*, Adelaide, 27-30 Nov. <http://www.aare.edu.au/06pap/seb06658.pdf>
- Sebalj, D. (2006, Aug 28). The Administrative Professional: Finding the Academic Within. Presentation at the *2006 TEMC*, Sydney Hilton.

Journal Articles

- Sebalj, D., & Holbrook, A. (2008). The Profile of University Research Services Staff. *The Australian Universities Review*, 51(1), 30-38.
- Sebalj, D. (2007). A National Study For and About Research Services Staff. *Up in ARMS, Newsletter of the Australasian Research Management Society Inc.* No. 11. <http://www.researchadmin.org.au/images/stories/up%20in%20arms%20final.pdf>
- Sebalj, D. (2006). TEMC 2006 Scholarship Recipients Report. *ATEM NSW News*, 3, 2.

Project Update: 25 July 2009

After an extended leave of absence during the first half of the year the writing up of this research study now continues. In September 2009, a conference paper will be presented by the researcher titled: *University Research Administration as a Profession: A Sustainable Notion?* at the annual Tertiary Education Management Conference (TEMC), being held in Darwin.

Project Update: 18 July 2008

This study is now in the writing up phase. This will take some time after which several planned journal articles and papers will be developed. Thank you to those who have maintained an interest in the research project and its outcomes. The process has taken longer than expected mainly due to the challenge of first-time parenthood and an interstate relocation. While no conference presentations are envisaged for this research during 2008, there will be in 2009 following completion of the doctoral thesis.

Project Update: 16 August, 2007

Work on the project is gearing up again with the recent return of the researcher from maternity leave. The project is now past the half-way mark and data analysis is currently being undertaken. Part of the early research findings will underpin the paper: Complexity, Compliance and Change: A Study into University Research Services Administration which is to be presented at the 2007 TEMC Conference in Canberra on September 26. Unfortunately the researcher will be unable to attend the 2007 ARMS conference in Adelaide in September as previously advised. However, a poster of the study's preliminary findings entitled: A National Study For and About University Research Services Staff – Preliminary Findings will be displayed at the conference.

Project Update: April 2, 2007

The two-phase data collection process of the study is now complete. Over 70 interviews have been conducted via a two-round interview process during the period October 2006 to March 2007. The national online questionnaire sent to all identified central research services staff in 36 of the 37 Australian publicly funded universities is now closed.

The study's next phase of data analysis and synthesis has begun. Preliminary information about the study's findings will appear in the Australasian Research Management Society Inc (ARMS) April Newsletter [Up in ARMS, No 11 April 2007](#) (see page 9) followed by an invited presentation to the [2007 ARMS Conference](#) in Adelaide during September of this year. At this stage it is envisaged that a presentation will also be made to the 2007 Tertiary Education Management (TEM) Conference in Canberra in September. Once available, hotlinks to any publications and conference material relating to this study will appear on this project update page.

Thanks again to all those who have participated in the study to date and for the keen and ongoing interest that has been shown towards the study and its findings.

Project Update: February 7, 2007

The research project is now entering its final data collection phase with the commencement of second round interviews which are being conducted during February and March. My thanks to the research managers and administrators who have participated in the study to date and to those of you who have supported and continue to support its progress along the way.

If you would like to take part in this study but haven't as yet please email the researcher Darlene Sebalj at: Darlene.Sebalj@studentmail.newcastle.edu.au for instructions on how to become involved in this national research project.

Here's to an exciting and fulfilling 2007!

Project Update: December 8, 2006

The national online questionnaire closed on November 30 and first-round research interviews are due to be completed by the end of 2006. The second-round interviews will be conducted during the first months of the new year. For those of you who missed out on completing the questionnaire online, a hard copy version is now available. If you are interested in completing the questionnaire in paper-based form, please request one to be mailed to you by sending an email to the researcher at Darlene.Sebalj@studentmail.newcastle.edu.au

For all those who have completed the questionnaire and/or who have taken part in the interview process (or will soon) - thank you very much for your very welcomed participation and support. Thank you also to your patience with the follow up reminder emails about the online questionnaire!
All the best for a festive season!

Project Update: October 16, 2006

Following the launch of the study's questionnaire, attention is now turning towards the first-round interviews being phase 2 of the research data collection process. A number of these interviews have been conducted during the past fortnight with more scheduled over the next month.

For those of you who are interested in taking part in the interview component of this study, and who have not yet expressed their interest, please read the relevant information statement about the Interview phase and follow the instructions given. Once a completed Consent Form is emailed to the researcher at Darlene.Sebalj@studentmail.newcastle.edu.au then the 30 minute first-round interview will be scheduled to take place at a time convenient to the participant.

Project Update: September 15, 2006

This study was launched during the recent International Network of Research Management Societies (INORMS) conference in Brisbane. The theme of this inaugural conference was: Internationalisation of Research: The Big Issues and Opportunities of the Decade for Research Leaders and Managers held at the Sofitel Brisbane, Australia, 22-25 August 2006..

Following the launch, the first phase of the project commenced this week with invitational emails sent to university research services staff in publicly funded universities across Australia.

If you are a research services staff member of an Australian publicly funded university and you haven't received an invitational email to participate in this national study and would like to be involved, please read the relevant information statements about the study's Questionnaire and Interview phases and follow the instructions given.

Any queries about this research can be directed to the contact numbers above.

Darlene Sebalj

Researcher

The University of Newcastle,

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