



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NEWCASTLE  
AUSTRALIA

www.newcastle.edu.au

SEPTEMBER  
2007  
RESEARCH DIVISION  
NEWSLETTER

## DATA MANAGEMENT

The Data Management Unit has recently welcomed Kathy Worrad into the position of data analyst. This position was recently made vacant by staff movements and has left our unit temporarily short staffed. Kathy comes to us from IT Services and brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience that will greatly benefit Research Services. Kathy will be spending her first few weeks working with research statistics and spending time getting to know our systems.

The implementation of the research management system continues to make progress. The cleanup and migration of data from legacy systems has proven to be far more complicated and time-consuming than expected. The Animal Ethics, Human Ethics and Safety modules will be implemented in the first phase.

The Data Management Unit is also assisting the RQF team with the distribution of the recent RQF Macquarie trial results.

## AWARDS FOR RESEARCH EXCELLENCE: 2007

To recognise research excellence in outstanding early career and mid-career researchers from the University by the awarding of

**Faculty Awards for Research Excellence** - to be presented to the most outstanding applicant from each Faculty.

**Regional Campus Award for Research Excellence** - for an outstanding researcher from a campus other than the Callaghan, Newcastle hospitals and Newcastle city precincts, if not already selected for an award.

**The Vice-Chancellor's Award for Researcher of the Year** - to be presented to the most outstanding recipient for a Faculty or regional campus award.

Guidelines and nomination forms can be downloaded from the Research Services web site at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/index.html>

Please consider nominating a colleague. **NOMINATIONS CLOSE ON OCTOBER 15, 2007.**

## AUSTRALIAN MUSEUM EUREKA PRIZES - WINNER

Dr Nikki Verrills, School of Biomedical Science, is to be congratulated on her award of the 2007 Voiceless Eureka Prize at this year's Australian Museum Eureka Prizes. The \$10,000 'Voiceless Eureka Prize for Research which Replaces the Use of Animals or Animal Products' is awarded for work that has reduced, or has the potential to reduce, the use of animals or animal products in laboratory-based research, education and testing.

Dr Nikki Verrills is part of a team undertaking research that is successfully identifying drug resistant cancer cells without animal testing. Other team members are Associate Professor Maria Kavallaris and Dr Sela Pouha. Using new molecular biology and tissue culture technologies, the Kavallaris team not only discovered what makes certain cancer cells unresponsive to treatment, but did so without using traditional animal test subjects.



## RESEARCH GRANTS AND CONTRACTS

**Judy Alexander**, Associate Director, x18859  
Internal Grants, ARC LIEF

**Carolyn Fairhurst**, Senior Grants Officer, x17188 (Mon, Tues)  
Faculties of Business & Law, and Engineering & Built Environment, ARC Discovery Projects

**Megan Stephenson**, Senior Grants Officer, x17188 (Wed, Thurs, Fri)  
Faculties of Business & Law, and Engineering & Built Environment, ARC Discovery Projects

**Jennifer Saunders**, Senior Grants Officer, x16482  
Faculties of Education & Arts, and Science & Information Technology, ARC Linkage

**Elianne Renaud**, Senior Grant Officer, x15944  
Faculty of Health, NHMRC

**Neroli Finlay**, Grants Officer, x15353  
Faculties of Business & Law, Education & Arts, Engineering & Built Environment, and Science & Information Technology, GAMS

**Laura Miller**, Grants Officer, x15305 (Mon, Tues)  
Faculty of Health, NHMRC

**Rebecca Ford**, Grants Officer, x17733  
Travel Grants

## OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

### University of Newcastle Workshop Series for Research Supervisors

One of our strategic goals is to enhance research training. To meet this goal a new program of supervisor workshops has been developed that accommodates both new and experienced supervisors and which draws on local as well as external expertise. Supervisors are encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity to increase their knowledge of supervisory practice.

The Workshop Series for Research Supervisors will provide support for supervisors, delivering up-to-date, empirically grounded, information and providing access to best practice. The duration of the workshops varies from 2-4 hours.

Workshop topics include:

1. Orientation to supervision at the University of Newcastle for academics new to supervision and new to the University (21 September)
2. The basic principles of supervision for academics new to supervision (28 September)
3. Doctoral standards and preparing the candidate for examination (28 September)
4. Assisting research students to make the most effective use of the literature (19 October)
5. How students write and ways to assist them (including the most effective feedback strategies) (7 December)

Additional workshops will be announced in the near future. Registration is via HR online.

Full details of the workshops and other support materials for supervisors are available on the web at:  
<http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/rhd/supervision/index.html>

## WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

**ARC Linkage Project Grant Seminar**  
Mon 17 September  
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm  
Room, Administration Building, Ourimbah

Professor Stephen Crump and Brent Jenkins will present on his ARC grant experiences and Jennifer Saunders from Research Services will present on writing a Linkage Project application.

For further information contact **Jennifer Saunders** on x16482

### ARC Discovery Project Development Workshop

Tues 9 October  
10:00 am – 1:30 pm  
Venue TBA

This Workshop is designed to assist Early Career Researchers and researchers new to the scheme in applying for Australian Research Council (ARC) Discovery Project grants. Information will be provided how to prepare for and improve the quality of your application. Experienced grant holders and former ARC Panel members will be available to provide helpful insights and answer questions.

For further information contact **Carolyn Fairhurst** on x17188 (Mon, Tue)

### Cancer Council NSW Seminar

Thurs 8 November  
12:30 pm – 1:30 pm  
John Lambert Lounge, Callaghan

This seminar is designed to assist researchers in applying for a project grant from the Cancer Council NSW. This seminar will help participants understand the grant review process, including consumer review, how it works and how it affects them.

For further information contact **Elianne Renaud** on x15944. To register your interest or find out more contact the Cancer Council NSW by phone on 9334 1993 or email [grants@nswcc.org.au](mailto:grants@nswcc.org.au)

### NHMRC Workshop

Tues 22 November  
10.00 am – 2.00 pm  
Venue TBA

This workshop is designed for early career researchers or first time applicants who are considering a submission to the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) for funding in 2009. This workshop will give participants the opportunity to hear from key people within the process, including researchers who have previously been involved in NHMRC panels.

For further information contact **Elianne Renaud** on x15944

## RESEARCH QUALITY FRAMEWORK

### Newcastle/Macquarie RQF Trial

Final trial data was exchanged with Macquarie University on Monday 10 September. Results will be forwarded to researchers this week by email. Faculty PVCs and Heads of School will also receive the results for their Faculty/School.

While the rating results will be useful in determining RQF groupings, it is hoped that the assessor comments will have a longer-term benefit. Although comments are quite brief, in many cases assessors have offered useful advice on the best choice of "Best 4" publications and esteem factors, which will be helpful in preparing submission for the real RQF.

### RQF Groupings

Faculty PVCs have distributed a list of the (currently) 29 proposed RQF groupings, and the nominated convenors for each grouping. We will shortly be circulating tentative membership listings for these groupings for discussion. At this stage the proposed groups are neither final nor exhaustive. Membership will be finalised later this year following consultation with Faculties.

### RQF Workshop

The IRUA group is planning to conduct a 2 day workshop in Adelaide in early October to assist with preparation of RQF context statements. Each IRUA university will send key staff, and will provide assessors for trial panels. The University plans to send a number of RQF grouping convenors to participate. More details will be available soon.

## HUMAN ETHICS

Peer review. Before you submit an application to the Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) for approval, your proposed research is to undergo peer review within your Faculty and the *Peer Review and Head of School Declaration* in the application completed. "Unless proposed research has merit, and the researchers who are to carry out the research have integrity, the involvement of human participants in the research cannot be ethically justifiable." (*National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research*, 2007). In February 2007 the Academic Senate approved the [Peer Review of Research Proposals Submitted for Ethics Approval - Procedure 000800](#) which sets out the requirements for peer review panels or committees to be established in each Faculty. For more information please refer to the Assistant Dean (Research) in your Faculty.

## ANIMAL ETHICS

Researchers who use genetically modified animals should be aware of the NH&MRC "Guidelines for the generation, breeding, care and use of genetically modified and cloned animals for scientific purposes" available at <http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/ethics/animal/issues/index.htm#a>

Verne Sheather has been appointed as the Animal Ethics Officer, to replace Nicole Emanuel during her maternity leave (commencing 24 September 2007). All matters related to the Animal Care and Ethics Committee should be directed to Mrs Sheather after this time.

During the development and implementation of the animal ethics module of the new research management IT system, the Animal Welfare Officer will be available at the Life Sciences Building and the David Maddison Building on a weekly rotation basis, rather than weekly, (see calendar at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research/animal/aboutus-animal.html>).

## ANIMAL SERVICES

The autoclave at the Research Support Unit where most of the Balb/c mouse breeding is currently carried out has broken down irretrievably. One of the Individually Ventilated caging Units at the David Maddison Building has not been ventilating correctly and has been taken out of service.

One full time staff member at the Central Animal House has reduced her hours to part time and two casual staff within the David Maddison Building have resigned

The increased demand for cage space within the David Maddison building has led to a situation where the number of animal cages in use is greater than the capacity of the autoclave to process them.

The Research Division is working on solutions to these problems and updates will be provided in future newsletters.

## STATISTICS CORNER – August 2007

| Human Ethics                                      | Aug | 2007 | Animal Ethics                                    | During Aug | 2007 | Grants                                   | Aug    | 2007    | Graduate Studies                      | Total |
|---|-----|------|--|------------|------|--|--------|---------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Human Ethics Total Initial Applications Processed | 32  | 210  | Animal Ethics Initial Applications managed       | 12         | 78   | External grant applications processed    | 14     | 367     | RHD completions since 1 Jan 2007      | 128   |
| Expedited   | 29  | 185  |  |            |      |  |        |         | Masters                               | 31    |
| Full Review                                       | 3   | 25   |  |            |      |  |        |         | PhD                                   | 97    |
| Human Ethics Project Variation Applications       | 14  | 107  | Animal Ethics Renewal Applications managed       | 7          | 36   | External grant awards processed          | 25     | 175     | New RHD enrolments (Semester 2, 2007) | 62    |
|   |     |      |  |            |      |  |        |         | Masters                               | 30    |
|   |     |      |  |            |      |  |        |         | PhD                                   | 32    |
|   |     |      |  |            |      |  |        |         | International                         | 20    |
|   |     |      |  |            |      |  |        |         | Domestic                              | 42    |
| Human Ethics Approval Renewal Applications        | -   | 5    | Animal Ethics Variation Applications managed     | 39         | 146  | Value of external grant awards processed | \$3.3M | \$23.2M | RHD scholarships offered (2007 round) | 148   |
| Human Ethics Registration of HNEH approvals       | 4   | 64   | Facilities/ procedures/Animals/Records inspected | 6          | 92   |  |        |         |                                       |       |

[www.newcastle.edu.au/research](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/research)

For newsletter enquiries, contact: Rebecca Palmer on ext 17739 or [Rebecca.Palmer@newcastle.edu.au](mailto:Rebecca.Palmer@newcastle.edu.au)