

Research translation and the Higher Education Standards Framework – IRU Response

The Innovative Research Universities (IRU) appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback to the Higher Education Standards Panel (HESP) Secretariat on the proposed inclusion of research translation in the Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF). The IRU supports the intention to include research translation in the HESF, demonstrated through appropriate and effective institutional strategies.

Research translation is a defining characteristic of IRU members through their commitment to excellent research that helps find solutions to real-life problems. Engagement between our members and their local communities, including industry and not-for-profit sectors, has long been a priority. IRU members have well established institutional policy settings supporting research translation, broadly defined to include translation into improved health and social wellbeing, commercialisation and other forms end-user uptake.

The main feedback from IRU members is to ensure that the HESF contains a suitably broad definition of research translation. This would ensure the HESF requirements accommodate the breadth of research translation activities and end-users that benefit from Australian university research. Although this breadth is clearly articulated in the range of translation activities included in the HESF consultation paper, the proposed amendment for B1.3.14 contains only one form of translation as an example (“including commercialisation”).

If the HESF is to contain examples of research translation, the IRU recommends this be articulated in a separate sentence and include a non-exhaustive list. This would provide consistency with HESF Standard B1.3.12 which specifies the expectation for engagement with industry in education, followed by a non-exhaustive list of multiple examples in a subsequent sentence (“This engagement may include, but is not limited to, curriculum development, professional engagement, work-integrated learning, and research partnerships”).

IRU recommendation

If the HESF is to contain examples of research translation, the IRU recommends this include a non-exhaustive list, consistent with the HESF Standard B1.3.12. The IRU offers the following suggested text:

B1.3.14 [The higher education provider] demonstrates systematic support and identifies opportunities for translation of research findings to measurable, real-world impacts. Opportunities for translation may include, but are not limited to, policy settings, improved health and wellbeing, commercialisation and other forms of end-user uptake.