Research Office
Service Charter

July 2011

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Vision ........................................................................................................................................................................2
2. Mission .........................................................................................................................................................................2
3. Our Core Services .....................................................................................................................................................3
4. Our Clients ...............................................................................................................................................................5
5. Our Service Standards ................................................................................................................................................5
6. Our Commitment to You ..........................................................................................................................................5
7. Continuous Improvement ...........................................................................................................................................6
8. Giving us feedback .....................................................................................................................................................6
9. Our Structure & Staff .................................................................................................................................................6
10. Document Control ..................................................................................................................................................10
1. Vision

The Research Office at Charles Sturt University (CSU) will collaborate with the research community in the core business of research and research education, and to assist the University in achieving the performance objectives contained within its Strategic Plan.

2. Mission

We aim to provide high quality coordination of research management services, aligned with and responsive to the strategic directions of the University.

The University community, and academic researchers, in particular, will receive excellent service, support and respect from the Office. Our services are client focussed, efficient, effective and welcoming of feedback to enhance continuous improvement initiatives.

The goals of our staff aim to be respected by the academic community at the University for their:

*Research knowledge*

- expertise in research administration
- familiarity with the processes of research
- considerable knowledge of CSU researchers and their areas of expertise

*Research engagement*

- knowledge of external research support programs and to whom such opportunities might be directed internally,
- pro-actively engagement on research issues, facilitation of new opportunities and assistance in solving problems that getting in the way of research, as they arise
- relationships with key stakeholders in the research community nationally, including other tertiary institutions, public sector research agencies, grant agencies, statutory authorities and government

*Researcher development*

- expertise and willingness with which they assist, provide advice to, and develop, researchers at various career stages
- facilitation and promotion of research and research education

*Higher Degree by Research (HDR) student support*

- capacity to provide user-friendly, clear, and streamlined support to all HDR students and supervisors
- pro-active engage with the HDR student community
- flexibility in creating solutions to HDR issues

*Efficiency and effectiveness*

- work ethic and flexibility
- respect of timeliness with which they respond to enquiries and requests for assistance
- capacity to translate policy into effective streamlined processes
- considerable familiarity with the institution’s research data, and their capacity to analyse and interpret
3. **Our Core Services**

**Office operations**

To provide service and support to the University through administration that:

- increases staff knowledge about internal and external reporting requirements and the processes underpinning them
- creates ways of operating that include more pro-active engagement with internal groups
- creates ways of administering research that are more streamlined, efficient and helpful
- ensures the good will of the University community
- ensures the position of the Research Office being seen as a primary source of expertise in research administration

**Data**

- collects quality data and facilitates the accurate reporting thereof
- provides support and expertise in data collection processes
- ensures data integrity
- collaborates with clients to meet reporting deadlines
- introduces a data verification process to capture research data throughout the year
- provides a focus on being proactive and supportive whilst recognizing compliance constraints

**Finance (specialist reporting)**

- liaises closely with the Division of Finance
- supports the need for researchers to track own budget responsibilities

**Policy coordination**

In close liaison with key research stakeholders;

- reviews existing policies and removes, simplifies or updates accordingly
- ensures policies reflect legislative change

**Contracts & Commercialisation**

- monitors and reviews the increasing contract load and develop relevant strategies to ensure continuity and growth

**Grants**

- provides assistance to recognize and publicize new funding opportunities
- provides assistance to for pre-award, submission and post-award management
- ensures mechanisms for tracking milestones

**HDR**

- provides administration and support to manage post-enrolment functions, including liaison with Student Admissions, checking applications for completeness, categorization, liaison with academic areas and with the HDR recruitment team
- works pro-actively to recognise opportunities to enrol new HDR students, seek new sources of HDR scholarships, market and advertise HDR opportunities,
- administers progress reports for Director Research or DVCR sign-off and for input into relevant committee papers, scholarship functions, and thesis submission
- seeks clarification of what parts of the HDR processes lie with Faculties, Division of Student Administration, Division of Finance and with the Research Office
Finance transactions

- process all HDR-associated finance, including scholarships finance, and grant-related transactions.

Professional Development & Communication

- reviews and update existing programs
- subscribes to the Future Research Leaders Program
- explores more flexible learning options
- promotes and markets programs more widely and succinctly
- proactively seeks opportunities for further engagement with academic staff and HDR students
- continual reviews, updates and improves the Research Office website
- develops ‘user-friendly’ on line forms to enhance processes
- explores the need to provide greater assistance for staff preparing higher quality grant applications for external grants and tenders

Summary of proposed change in staffing profile

- provides on-going professional development for all staff in the Research Office to meet the changing needs of the University and environment
- equips staff within function areas with the skills and knowledge to take the new vision for research performance forward
- employs staff at more senior levels and with greater knowledge and autonomy capable of providing higher level advice, support and decision making
- continuously reviews the increasing demands on the Research Office staff and manages accordingly to meet client expectations

Location of the Research Office

- provides a seamless service to all areas to the University regardless of campus location
- considers future staff location and the greater ability to meet the University needs

Leadership

The Research Office will engage with the University Community through leadership that:

- is research-qualified and research-experienced
- discusses research with researchers on an equal footing
- has excellent networking skills
- is expert in research administration gained through experience from both the researcher and administrative perspectives
- can transform research administrative support culture

Leadership of the Research Office is critical to achieving its vision. Strong leadership is required in order to build:

Internal relationships that

- are held in high respect and credibility by both academic and general staff
- are known by, and interact with, all areas of the University
- are knowledgeable on all aspects of the research portfolio
- are based on peer conversations whose foundation is a shared experience in research

External relationships that

- interact with face to face, and are known to, their peers in other universities
- have excellent networks of contacts in research agencies, statutory bodies related to research, industries with whom CSU is engaged in research, and in relevant government departments at regional, state and federal levels
Team relationships that

- build and develop a loyal, efficient and effective Research Office team
- enhance the career paths of their staff
- delegate opportunities to staff within the team
- bring about a transformational change in culture

4. Our Clients

Clients of the Research Office are wide and varied and include:

- End users of CSU research
- Government reporting and funding entities
- External funding organisations
- External Universities/collaborators
- CSU Deans, Associate/Sub Deans
- UG (under-graduate) and UG(Hons) students
- HDR students and prospective HDR students
- HDR Supervisors and mentors
- CSU Researchers, including adjunct staff
- CSU Governance committees
- CSU Research Centres
- CSU Senior Executive
- CSU Divisions and Offices (including Student Administration, Student Services, Marketing, International, Library Services, Student Central, Finance, Human Resources, Planning & Audit)
- Local Communities
- Thesis examiners
- Media

5. Our Service Standards

The Research Office is committed to providing a professional client service which considers and understands the needs of its clients. We treat all our clients with respect, courtesy and fairness.

Our client service will:

- Be high quality, efficient, friendly and reliable
- Be considerate and understanding of client needs and circumstances
- Be able to provide knowledge and expertise
- Be able to provide guidance, support and flexibility
- Be able to provide a consistent, solutions focussed service, resolving issues to satisfy client needs
- Ensure follow up of enquiries which we cannot respond to immediately
- Have understanding of CSU timeframes and deadlines
- Utilise technology and data management to support needs of clients
- Be welcoming of feedback in order to help us improve our services

6. Our Commitment to You

The Research Office is committed to achieving positive outcomes for our Clients. We will work with you to identify and understand your needs and help you achieve your objectives within timeframes that are important to you and consistent within CSU policy.

We will provide expertise and explanation concerning legislative external requirements and support you to achieve deadlines.
7. **Continuous Improvement**

The Research Office is dedicated to quality assurance and continuous improvement. We will be setting key objectives upon which our performance will be measured.

We will be undertaking periodic reviews of the services we provide and finding out directly from our clients how success might be improved.

8. **Giving us feedback**

The Research Office is welcoming and appreciative of any feedback received. Our staff will regularly ask our Clients for direct feedback and our website will provide feedback forms which can be completed and submitted. Please email the Research Office.

We will collate and assess all feedback received in order to improve the services we provide.

9. **Our Structure and Our Staff (links)**

- [Purpose and Structure](#)
- [Organisational Chart](#)
- [Research Office Team](#)
- [Communication Plan](#)

10. **Document Control**

**Document Status and Revision History**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Issue date</th>
<th>Revisions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Dawn Staley</td>
<td>15/7/11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Document Authorisation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
<th>Andrea Bishop</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position:</td>
<td>Director Research</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>