Readiness for the Research Quality Framework at The University of Queensland

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Preparatory work

Two trial runs for the RQF already completed –

- 2005 – 2 schools (research presented electronically via Web pages)
- 2006 – 14 schools, 1 centre (research presented electronically via UQ eSpace repository)

Working party involved –

- Office of DVC (Research)
- Office of Research and Postgraduate Studies
- Library staff
- Academic staff in schools being assessed
- Support staff in schools
2005 trial - background

- Two schools only
  - 63 papers (Semester 1)
  - 230+ papers (Semester 2)
- Academics selected best 3 works from latest 5 years
- The majority of research (95%) was delivered electronically to research assessors via Library-created Web pages
- Non-electronic materials, including books, were lent from library collections and sent to assessors by post
2005 trial - workflow

- Library staff designed research reporting templates for schools
- Academics entered citation data on to templates
- Templates included
  - Full citation details
  - Statement explaining the rationale for the specific work’s inclusion
  - Research area for which academic was being assessed
2005 trial - workflow

- Library staff
  - created a separate Web page for each citation
  - added DOIs or links to online material for each citation, if possible
  - scanned and uploaded any non-electronic material and linked this material to citations

- Citations were listed alphabetically by title, listed under School names and grouped by research area
2005 trial - workflow

- Only assessors could log in to the password-protected RQA Web pages
- Authentication done once on initial log in
- Assessor log ins were linked to the research areas being assessed (i.e. assessors only saw material relevant to their reviewing tasks)
- Assessors either viewed a local electronic file or viewed material online at journal or conference sites
- Assessors were also given log ins to discussion forum facilities (via Blackboard)
- There was a separate discussion forum set up for each research area
**Pros**

- Easy for assessors to follow links from Web pages to items, either locally or remotely
- Clear labelling and presentation of material
- Easy to provide onward link to discussion forums

**Cons**

- Large workload for library staff
- Schools did not fully ‘own’ process
- Data was double-handled
- Data was not easily re-usable
- Separate system for assessor discussions
- No online system can deliver print material such as books
2006 trial - background

- 15 schools, 1 centre
  - Thousands of papers
- Academics selected best 4 published works from latest 5 years
- The majority of research was delivered electronically to research assessors via an institutional repository
- Non-electronic materials, including books, were purchased and sent to assessors by post
2006 trial - background

- Schools identified participating staff (level B and above)
- Academics were assigned to specific ‘research groups’ (some cross-faculty / cross-disciplinary)
- Research groups were matched with assessor panels
- Schools gathered citation data
2006 trial - **Workflow**

- UQ eSpace repository provided the mechanism for electronic delivery of research
- New data models were created for each publication type, and included these fields –
  - Full citation
  - Pre-loaded look-up tables for
    - Author names (tied to log in)
    - Research groups (tied to log in)
    - RFCD codes (to tag material for specific panels)
  - Rationale for inclusion
  - Link to local file or to DOI / robust URL
  - Author keywords
- Data entry staff from schools logged in to specific collections to enter data
School staff entered citations and supporting statements into UQ eSpace and ‘published’ completed entries, i.e.
  - Records with full citation + DOI
  - Records with full citation + link to local electronic file
- Liaison Librarians checked accuracy of ‘unpublished’ entries, added any missing data, and added DOIs/URLs to complete and ‘publish’ records
- Staff in Office of DVC (Research) provided a Help Desk
- Library staff scanned non-electronically available material (apart from books) and uploaded it to UQ eSpace
- Librarians purchased and disseminated books to reviewers
- Once all data entry was completed and checked, the material was signed off for assessors
- Assessors were given log ins to UQ eSpace that linked them to their specific review collections
**Pros**

- Assessors logged straight in to their specific review collections
- Data entry was simplified by pre-populating forms with drop-down choices for author names, research groups, and RFCD codes
- Schools had input to process
- Data in repository available for reuse/repurposing

**Cons**

- New system took time to bed down
- Assessor discussions occurred elsewhere
- No online system can deliver print material such as books
Workflow issues considered by research assessment working party

- What research gets included?
- Which academics take part in the exercise?
- Who decides what academic work is ‘best’?
- Who enters the citation data?
- Who checks it?
- Who ensures compliance of academics?
- How is the project kept on track and to timetable?
- What about copyright?
- Who handles queries?
- Who documents the system, and where is documentation and help available?
- How do assessors access material for review?
- How do assessors communicate with each other?
- How is assessor compliance monitored?
Conclusions 1

- The repository solution had several benefits over a Web page model
  - Forms for publication types were created specifically for the research assessment process
  - Forms could be changed (added to, remodelled) without loss of data even after data entry had commenced
  - Incorrect data such as misnamed research groups could be fixed globally
  - Data quality could be checked in daily data dumps of entries
  - Daily statistics could be produced on the number of papers entered, from where, and so on, facilitating project management and compliance tracking
Conclusions 2

- Data already gathered can be repurposed for RQF 2008
- Existing forms can be remodelled when RQF reporting requirements are finalised
- The same data can easily be displayed in different ways and combinations, and can be customised for RQF 2008
- The repository software is under constant development and will deliver additional functionality such as comment/annotation by reviewers by 2008
- Data entered can be repurposed for CVs, annual reports, research reporting, etc.
UQ eSpace home page

http://espace.library.uq.edu.au/
Research assessment collections only visible after log in – not otherwise visible

Allocated log in privileges govern who sees what
Sample browse listing – author, title, publication type, date, research group, link to full record
DOI direct link – routed through our ezproxy to handle once-only authentication

DOI entered here – we programmed the system to extract the DOI from here and add leading code to create a working link

Specific fields requested for research assessment exercise
Specific fields requested for research assessment exercise

Link to locally scanned and uploaded file
Without logging in, users can only browse publicly available communities. The RQA collections are only available to specific log ins.
Once a user logs in, a new button ‘My UQ eSpace’ appears. All collections to which user has rights appear in that space.
How My UQ eSpace looks to a user

All items ‘published’ – no records left to check

Log ins tied to specific collections – user only sees relevant collections
A collection with some items still not ‘published’ – 3 records left to check

User may be associated with more than one collection
Checklist of RQF functionality

- **Support RQF data model**
  - UQ eSpace data models can be customised to meet whatever metadata needs to be supplied for the RQF

- **Support complex or non-text items**
  - UQ eSpace can support any format of item

- **Facilitate workflow for academics and administrators**
  - UQ eSpace’s workflow can be customised to suit different scenarios

- **Manage groups and access**
  - UQ eSpace administration allows Active Directory/LDAP authentication as well as log ins for individual users or groups

- **Enable communication and automated reporting**
  - UQ eSpace comment/annotation system will allow assessors to discuss research within the system. UQ eSpace security will protect this material from being seen by any but those authorised. Statistics and data dumps can assist with project tracking and milestones.

- **Liaise with the research office**
  - UQ eSpace can allocate ‘admin’ privileges for Research Office staff to facilitate RQF project management
Conclusions

- Workflow must be planned and timetabled well in advance
- Each ‘stage’ must be managed
- Someone needs to keep schools ‘on track’
- All documentation and instructions must be online and easily accessible
- Data entry instructions must be foolproof
- You need a Help Desk