

# **MEDIA RELEASE**

**NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA**

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors

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## Research excellence places UTAS among the best

The University of Tasmania is placed among Australia's leading research universities, according to the latest Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) results.

UTAS's research has been rated world-standard or better in 16 broad fields (or 71% of the UTAS areas assessed) by the ERA, which is administered by the Australian Research Council on behalf of the Australian Government.

UTAS Vice-Chancellor Professor Peter Rathjen said the University's research footprint was significant as evidenced by this round of ERA results.

"UTAS has a growing number of fields of research assessed at world-standard or better," Prof Rathjen said. "Today's results confirm UTAS as one of Australia's leading research-intensive universities performing at or above international standards."

ERA's highest possible rating of '5', reserved for outstanding research, has been awarded to UTAS in nine specific discipline areas, up from three in the previous round of results in 2010. These discipline areas are clinical sciences; analytical chemistry; geology; oceanography; ecology; evolutionary biology; plant biology; forestry sciences; agriculture, land and farm management.

The University also has 15 areas performing above world-standard (a '4' rating). These are: physical sciences; astronomical and space sciences; chemical sciences; organic chemistry; earth sciences; environmental science and management; biological sciences; agricultural and veterinary sciences; fisheries sciences; horticultural production; law and legal studies; law; journalism and professional writing; history and archaeology; and historical studies.

Of these 4's, journalism and professional writing and fisheries sciences received the top scores in the country.

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) Prof Paddy Nixon said the ERA 2012 results reflected UTAS's ongoing investment in research.

“UTAS has experienced growth in research activity and profile in recent years,” he said.

“These results also point to our success in harnessing Tasmania’s unique position to attack globally significant problems, such as climate change, the need to boost food production and the challenge of maintaining biodiversity, and how we’re providing leadership on the national stage.

“The rankings – from science through to history and humanities – point to the breadth of our research strength.

“Our researchers should be extremely proud of the quality of their work.”

The ERA is an independent national review of research across Australian universities.

ERA’s rating scale awards ‘5’ to outstanding performance well above world-standard; ‘4’ to performance above world-standard; ‘3’ to performance at world-standard; ‘2’ to performance below world-standard; and ‘1’ to performance well below world-standard.

Of the 22 broad disciplines rated by the ERA, UTAS was assessed in 21.

All Australian universities submitted comprehensive information on their research activities for ERA 2012—including detailed data in relation to publications and other research outputs, salaried and non-salaried researchers and related staff, external research income and patents. More than 1,000 leading researchers from Australia and abroad participated in the assessment process as evaluation committee members or peer reviewers.

For more information about ERA’s broad fields of research and specific fields of research, also known as two-digit and four-digit fields, visit <http://www.arc.gov.au/era/>

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