

MEDIA RELEASE

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

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ATTENTION: Chiefs of Staff, News Directors



World-leading research at UTAS

A national analysis of Australian university research has found the University of Tasmania is meeting or exceeding world standards in 71 per cent of disciplines.

The acting vice-chancellor, Professor David Rich, today said UTAS is well-positioned to lead the state in key development areas following Excellence in Research for Australia's (ERA) assessment that research standards in horticultural science, oceanography, analytical chemistry and visual art and craft are outstanding.

"This result is great news for a one-university state," he said.

"Our research is well-placed to play a hugely supportive role in terms of the Tasmanian Government's leadership goals in agriculture, fisheries, Antarctica; in industries such as pharmaceuticals and mining, and areas such as forensics and DNA.

"This news also means that many of our undergraduates are being taught by some of the world's top researchers.

"Two of UTAS' top-scoring areas are associated with major research groups located in the Faculty of Science, Engineering and Technology: the Tasmanian Institute for Agricultural Research (TIAR) and the Australian Centre for Research on Separation Science (ACROSS). Oceanography research is located in the Institute for Marine and Antarctic Studies (IMAS).

"The Faculty of Arts also did well, achieving at or above world standard in 89 per cent of the disciplines in which it was assessed.

"We also achieved highly on research in sociology and visual arts and crafts. Along with fine food and wine, tourism, events and festivals the visual arts and crafts are significant and growing contributors to Tasmania's economy and cultural life."

ERA uses leading researchers to evaluate research in eight discipline clusters. This is the largest survey ever of its kind in Australia; a 2009 trial evaluated two clusters.

The ERA assessment scale is from 1-5, with five the highest possible rank – achieved by horticultural science, oceanography and analytical chemistry. Visual arts and crafts received a four; no university received a five in that area.

Other areas where UTAS achieved above the national average included animal production, clinical sciences, law and inorganic chemistry. Seventy-six per cent of disciplines are at national average or above.

Professor Rich said the results were especially welcome considering the broad spectrum of areas the university needed to cover as the only university in geographically spread state.

“These results strongly position the university to take a leadership role in this state’s future,” he said.

Professor Paddy Nixon, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) is available for media comment.

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