

Australian Council of the Deans and Directors of Creative Arts [DDCA]

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DDCA Response to ANZSRC Review

Executive Summary

The Australian Council of Deans and Directors of Creative Arts (DDCA) was established to advance the disciplines of the creative arts in the higher education sector and to advocate for their role in society more broadly. Representing learning, teaching and research in the creative arts in Australia, and with a membership of 23 universities, peak bodies and other higher education institutions, it builds upon the work carried out by the academic peak bodies representing the creative arts in higher education in Australia.

DDCA welcomes this opportunity to contribute to the review of the ANZSRC and particularly to suggest corrections to the existing categorisation, which continues to inadequately reflect creative arts disciplines. The original ANZSRC classifications were drawn up in 1998, when, as a disciplinary group, creative arts was settling in to the university research system following the amalgamations of independent art colleges and CAEs. Creative arts was largely an emerging area of research at that time. Twenty years on, creative arts research has matured. Creative arts staffing numbers have increased and now represent nearly 5% of fulltime, fractional and casual staff employed within Higher education institutions, a cohort similar in size to Education and larger than those in IT and Engineering and related disciplines. Within the creative arts, agreed methodologies have been established and it continues to evolve and respond to the broader changes in society. The connection between health and creative arts disciplines in art and music therapy, and the influence of technological advances in digital arts are two examples of relatively recent and rapidly emerging research focus that have shaped contemporary creative arts research.

The responses contained in this submission were determined in consultation with creative arts peak bodies in art and design (Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools), creative writing (Australasian Association of Writing Programs), film and screen production (Australian Screen Production Education and Research Association) and leading scholars in creative arts fields of visual arts and music.

A priority reform that is agreed across the sector is modification of the descriptions of types of research activity (Q2) to better include research conducted through creative arts methodologies. The original ANZSRC did not have the opportunity to respond to the marginalising effect of the research system upon creative arts research that was pointed out in the government commissioned 1998 Strand Report, and the minor amendments that have taken place in subsequent reviews have failed to adequately address these inequities. This review provides an opportunity to appropriately encompass a large swathe of research that continues to contribute to Australian economic growth and societal advancement.

This review also provides an opportunity to address a misclassification that fails to comply with the ANZSRC's own reasoning for FoR categorisation, namely the

conjoining of performing arts and creative writing, despite each having their own distinct methodological approaches and discipline stances. (Q8) The separation of these disciplinary groups represents an urgent and long overdue correction.

Specific responses to questions posed in discussion document

ANZSRC Principles

Q 1. Are the principles of the Review outlined in Section 2 of the Discussion Paper appropriate and sufficient? Do any further overarching principles need to be considered in developing the revised ANZSRC?

Type of Activity

Q 2. What suggestions do you have to improve the ToA component of the classification?

The ARC's definition of research under ERA as 'the creation of new knowledge and/or the use of existing knowledge in a new and creative way so as to generate new concepts, methodologies, inventions and understandings' is more inclusive of creative disciplines in a way that the four types of activity currently are not. DDCA suggests minor wording modifications to the current type definitions to increase inclusivity of creative arts research. The suggested revisions to the existing text are underlined below:

Pure basic research is experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge and understanding without looking for long term benefits other than the advancement of knowledge.

Strategic basic research is experimental and theoretical work undertaken to acquire new knowledge and understanding directed into specified broad areas in the expectation of practical discoveries. It provides the broad base of knowledge necessary for the solution of recognised practical problems.

Applied research is original work undertaken primarily to acquire new knowledge and understanding with a specific application in view. It is undertaken either to determine possible uses for the findings of basic research or to determine new ways of achieving some specific and predetermined objectives.

Experimental development is systematic work, using existing knowledge and understanding gained from research or practical experience, which is directed to producing new materials, products, devices, policies, behaviours, outlooks, processes or practices; to installing new processes, systems and services, including creative and professional practices that emerge from research; or to improving substantially those already produced or installed.

Q 3. Are there any other categories that should be added to the ToA? If so, how would they be defined?

Creative Research and Practice as new type of activity (ToA) needs to be considered in the longer term because of its unique approach to practice-led research methodologies and its contribution to the broader research paradigm. However, it is acknowledged that more data and information needs to be gathered to explore the consequences of such an addition. It is suggested that the ARC consider this

inclusion, in consultation with relevant creative arts disciplinary bodies, between now and the next review period.

Q 4. Is there ambiguity in the existing ToA categories? How could this be improved?

The recommendations in Q2 and Q3 respond to this question.

Q 5. Should ANZSRC adopt the *Frascati Manual 2015* ToA definitions

The current ANZSRC definition is more appropriate and inclusive for Australian research. The Frascati Manual displays a lack of awareness of how research in creative arts disciplines already meet the five criteria established for determining whether an activity is R & D activity. The Frascati Manual therefore does not acknowledge creative research in the arts nor does it reflect the recommendation that an additional ToR for the creative arts be established (Q3). DDCA would be concerned if any adoption of the Frascati Manual definitions replicated the erroneous misrepresentations contained in that manual in ANZSRC.

Fields of Research

Q 6. Is the current overall structure appropriate?

No. This needs some modification. Some minor changes to the 6 digit codes need to be considered to better reflect the discipline fields and the emerging areas of creative research and practice.

a. Should there be more or fewer levels to the hierarchy?

No. Additional levels of hierarchy may serve to better reflect the specificity of single disciplines but could have the effect of diluting submissions particularly in smaller institutions where critical mass of researchers is already a limiting factor.

b. Would it be useful to have broad themes or ‘one digit’ classifications such as Sciences, Medicine, Social Sciences and Humanities, similar to the ‘Sector’ level of SEO?

No. A one digit classification would serve no useful purpose given the methodological differences inherent across disciplines and may serve to hide distinct issues related to specific discipline domains such as creative arts.

Q 7. What criteria, in your view, should be applied to determine the classification of research?

DDCA finds the current mechanism of considering methodological approach to determine classification as appropriate however, this should be applied consistently and with an awareness of the methodological approaches used by disciplines. This lack of awareness is demonstrated in the current combination of performing arts and creative writing in FoR 1904.

a. What criteria should be applied to determine the boundaries between Division, Group and Field classifications?

While the current mechanism for determining classification by methodology is acceptable, it should be acknowledged that there are inherent differences in approach to creative practice and creative outputs in the arts than in other discipline fields. FoR 19 therefore should serve to build a narrative around practice-led research, performative and other outcomes related to impact that would help define and strengthen this FoR.

b. Should research methodologies, publication practices, or any other factors be considered as key criteria for classifying research?

A feature common to many creative arts disciplines is the 'publication' of their research in Non Traditional Research Outputs (NTROs) that can inform the methodological approach adopted. Researchers whose work is communicated primarily in these formats frequently report marginalisation or exclusion due to the nature of their output in research funding, academic promotion and recognition of their research. However, there is also a strong correlation across disciplines with publication in traditional text based research outputs and any change would need to be mindful of disruption to this connection. In relation to this, as the majority of creative research and practice in the arts relies on a working relationship between theory and practice, any restructuring of FoR discipline clusters should take into account this important relational aspect of praxis in terms of research methodologies. DDCA suggests that further information on this point would be needed to avoid unintentional consequences. As a representative body for researchers in creative arts whose work includes NTRO, DDCA would welcome the opportunity to assist the ARC to undertake more detailed consultation with the sector to address this issue more comprehensively to inform future revisions

c. Apart from the Principles described in Section 2, are there any other specific criteria that should be applied?

Q 8. Where should the classifications change (at the Division, Group or Field level)? Please identify specific codes, where appropriate. In particular:

a. What new or emerging areas of research should be allocated FoR codes (and at which level)?

DDCA believes that the following changes should be considered:

DDCA agrees with the peak body for creative writing, the Australasian Association for Writing Programs (AAWP) that Creative Writing be removed from 1904, and renamed 1903 "Creative and Professional Writing" constituted from the following six digit codes:

- 190301 Creative Writing (including playwriting and screenwriting)
- 190302 Professional Writing (including arts and culture writing)
- 190303 Journalism (including media writing)
- 190304 Technical Writing
- 190395 Creative and Professional Writing not elsewhere classified

DDCA supports the recommendation made by the Australian Screen Production Education and Research Association (ASPERA) that FoR 1902 Film, Television and Digital Media should be renamed Screen and Digital Media.

DDCA recommends that Installation Art should be moved from 190504 to 190502, resulting in: 190502 Fine Art (including Painting, Sculpture and Installation); and 190504 Performance Art.

DDCA agrees with the Australian Council of University Art and Design Schools (ACUADS) recommendation for modification of 120301 to include Design Criticism and a new six-digit code created to incorporate Data Visualisation and Computational Design. The recommended revised coding for FoR 1203 (Design) is provided below (additional text underlined):

120301 Design History, Theory and Criticism
120302 Service Design and Social Design
120303 Design Practices (incl. Design Management and Professional Practice)
120304 Interaction and Experience Design
120305 Industrial Design
120306 Textile and Fashion Design
120307 Visual Communication Design (incl. Graphic Design)
120308 Data Visualisation and Computational (Parametric / Generative) Design
120399 Design Practice and Management not elsewhere classified

b. Should any of the existing FoR codes be split, deleted or merged?

Creative Arts is appropriate as a two digit FoR classification but as indicated above, FoR 1904 inappropriately brings performing arts and creative writing together in one FoR. This is despite distinct and different methodologies applying, a factor which is declared by ANZSRC as the rationale for categorisation.

DDCA notes that music researchers seek a change to the current six digit coding but that there has not been a peak body able to model and canvass a confirmed consensus. However, it is proposed that 190408 Music Therapy be revised to include music psychology: 190408 Music Therapy and Psychology.

c. Should any of the existing Group or Field codes be moved to other places in the classification?

d. Is there ambiguity or redundancy in the existing FoR codes? (e.g. areas where research could reasonably be classified in two or more different codes)

e. Where changes are proposed, please explain why the changes are necessary and what criteria you have used to determine the need for change.

As outlined in relation to the recommendations above, the current ANZSRC classification does not reflect current research and practice in the creative arts.

Q 9. How can the FoR codes better capture Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, Māori Studies, and Pacific Peoples Studies research, and at what level (e.g. Field, Group, Division)?

Q 10. How can the FoR codes better capture interdisciplinary/multidisciplinary research, and at what level (e.g. Field, Group, Division)?

Socio-economic Objective

Q 11. Is the current overall structure appropriate?

a. Should there be more or fewer levels to the hierarchy?

b. Would it be desirable to change the Sector codes to numerical, rather than alphabetic, identifiers?

Q 12. Are the Sector level categories well defined enough to capture all types of socio-economic objectives?

a. Do you have specific feedback on the usability and interpretability of the current Sector categories?

Q 13. Do the Division level categories appropriately capture all types of research objectives?

a. Do you have specific feedback on the usability and interpretability of the current Division categories?

b. Are there emerging areas of economic development that should be better defined?

DDCA notes that the current SEO codes contain no mechanism for capturing specific indigenous research outcomes and would support any proposal put forward by other disciplinary groups for a category that explicitly articulates the benefit/ use of indigenous knowledge.

Q 14. Should any of the existing SEO codes be split, deleted or merged?

Given the contribution made by creative arts to the Australian economy, and the close connection of creative arts research, whether in the form of performance, compositions, exhibition of new work or the provision of university venues for public participation in culture, DDCA recommends that the current SEO 9501 (Arts and Leisure) that this SEO be renamed Arts and Culture and that Sport be removed from inclusion in this SEO.

a. Where changes are proposed, please explain why the changes are necessary and what criteria you have used to determine the need for change.

The reasons for change are indicated in the responses provided above.

Q15. Is it easy or difficult to categorise large or complex research projects or programs under SEO? How could categorisation be simplified?

Implementation

Q 16. How do you (or your organisation) currently use ANZSRC?

Q 17. How would you (or your organisation) be affected if ANZSRC changes?

Q 18. What support do you need to implement ANZSRC (e.g. concordances for time-series mapping, coding tools etc.)?

Q 19. How frequently should the ANZSRC be updated in the future? What advantages or disadvantages would there be if, in future, ANZSRC was updated dynamically and on an ongoing basis in response to stakeholder feedback?

To ensure that ANZSRC is reflective of the changes in research practice, DDCA recommends that reviews should be conducted more frequently than has been current practice. The DDCA suggests a 3-year cycle for review to give sufficient lead-in time to the ERA cycle. However, any proposed changes should be communicated

and discussed with the disciplines that will be affected rather than revised solely on basis of individual stakeholder feedback.