



**NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION
INSTITUTIONAL REGISTRATION**

NATIONAL HIGHER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION BOARD

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National Standards for Higher Education Institutional Registration

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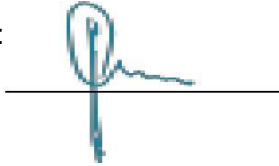
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These National Standards for Higher Education Institutional Registration is hereby adopted and certified by the National Higher and Technical Education (NHTEB) on the 29th March 2017.

Signed by:



Fr. Jan Czuba
CHAIRMAN-NHTEB

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONAL REGISTRATION

Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2014

The National Standards for Higher Education Institutional Registration was approved in principle by the National Higher and Technical Education Board (NHTEB) on the 13th of October 2016 and formally adopted on the 29th of March 2017.

Under the Act, all Papua New Guinea institutions offering higher education qualifications must be registered.

Guidance on what is expected is provided in the later pages of this document. These requirements are for the **initial establishment** of a Papua New Guinea Higher Education Institution.

Under section 104 of the Act, if the proposed institution is public (State owned), full details must be provided to DHERST as soon as practicable, to allow DHERST to report through the Minister to relevant government authorities.

Under section 113 of the Act, if the proposed institution is private (non-State), it must submit an expression of interest form to DHERST.

All of the Standards must be met for registration to be granted.

Registration can be granted with conditions that the institution must implement.

Established institutions should take note of the Guidance when undergoing an external quality assessment against these National Standards for Higher Education Institutional Registration. The expectation when external quality assessments are conducted is that all required planning will have been completed and relevant plans and policies will have been implemented.

Overseas universities operating or intending to operate in PNG must obtain **recognition** under the Act but are not required to undertake university registration.

A separate application form to seek recognition of an overseas university is available from DHERST. Section 123 of the Higher Education (General Provisions) Act 2014 sets out the qualifications for recognition of an overseas higher education institution.

Standards

1. The institution is committed to honesty and integrity in higher education.
2. The institution is guided by clearly stated purposes and is appropriately planned.
3. The institution has sufficient, secured financial resources for establishment and ongoing financial sustainability of its operations.
4. The institution has effective governance mechanisms.
5. The institution has appropriate management structures, processes and policies, including academic policies.
6. The institution's programmes, teaching and assessment are adequate to achieve the expected student learning outcomes.
7. The institution's teaching and administrative personnel are appropriate in number, qualifications, experience and skill.
8. The institution's students have access to appropriate levels of social, welfare and academic support services.
9. The institution has effective processes to provide, maintain and modernize learning resources.
10. The institution demonstrates a commitment to equity goals and strong engagement with stakeholders.

Standards 11 and 12 are specifically for Universities:

11. The university awards its own qualifications in at least two fields of study and offers programmes from entry level to postgraduate studies.
12. The university's staff must undertake research leading to the generation of new knowledge

STANDARD 1

The institution is committed to honesty and integrity in higher education.

Guidance

The provider or sponsoring body that will establish the institution must explain its understanding of the concept of academic integrity and have developed policies and processes to ensure academic integrity among both students and staff. Academic integrity includes students and staff behaving honestly, with no cheating, plagiarism, falsification, fabrication, fraud or bribery in the conduct of academic activities.

The institution's objectives should include a contribution to national development consistent with PNG Vision 2050 and the cultivation in students of critical and independent thought and the capacity for learning throughout life.

The institution must show how it will promote and protect free intellectual inquiry and expression in its learning, teaching, research and engagement activities.

The institution must demonstrate systems and processes for ensuring financial integrity, including systems to prevent misappropriation. The proposed financial management and control procedures of the institution should have been documented, with particular emphasis on procedures to prevent and detect fraud or corrupt activity.

The institution must have planned to provide honest, accurate and up to date information to prospective and enrolled students, government, communities, alumni, business and industry and other stakeholders. The institution must have established its website with adequate content before it commences operation.

The institution must have planned for students to be continuously informed about their relationship with the institution, which include:

- any contractual arrangements;
- the policies and procedures that apply to students
- the obligations of the institution; and,
- the rights and obligations of the student.

Prospective and enrolled students must have ready access to information about programmes and courses and about all charges, conditions, refunds, and costs involved in studying at the institution.

Students and staff must have ready access to effective grievance, complaint and whistleblowing processes, without fear of reprisal.

STANDARD 2

The institution is guided by clearly stated purposes and is appropriately planned.

Guidance

The purposes of the institution must be clearly stated, either in enabling or corporate legislation or articles of association or in other documents readily available to the public.

The provider or sponsoring body that will establish the institution must be reputable and be established in law as a corporate entity in PNG. If the provider is not the National Government, the provider's history, and the history of any parent entities, predecessors or related entity needs to show a sound track record in managing business operations and in the provision of education or related services at an acceptable level of quality and in accordance with any applicable regulatory requirements.

A comprehensive feasibility study for the institution should have been undertaken. The feasibility study must demonstrate a need for the institution that the proposed institution is practicable, that all applicable national laws can be complied with, and that extensive consultation has been undertaken with key stakeholders.

The proposed name of the institution should be appropriate for its purpose. The name must not duplicate the name of any other institution and must be free from any undesirable associations that could potentially harm the reputation of the new institution. Under Section 100 of the Act, no entity other than the State shall use the words 'Papua New Guinea', 'National' or 'State' in the university/institution's name, unless this has been approved under the Act.

A business model must have been prepared for the proposed institution, showing the actual and projected sources of revenue for 5-10 years (see Standard 3 also), and the model should have been independently validated by a qualified and reputable accounting firm. An enrolment plan must have been prepared, showing the expected numbers of students by year for 10 years.

A comprehensive risk management plan for the institution should have been prepared.

The provider must demonstrate that a site has been secured (owned or leased) that is appropriate in size for its planned operations and with potential for future development. The site must ensure sustainable physical viability, taking into account the risks of flood, landslides etc. Consideration of the site must take into account the availability of water, sewerage, electricity, fuel gas, telephones and internet access, building materials, furniture and labor for construction etc.

A guideline is an area of 10 acres, or 3 acres in city or 7 acres on city fringes for universities that will provide extensive face to face teaching. Universities that will operate mostly online do not need to meet this guideline. Planning for the institution's site should consider the need for the location to be suitable for academic activities and for the need for student accommodation, staff housing and for students and staff to have access to shopping and banking facilities etc.

Planning should also consider the security of staff and students and how this will be ensured.

STANDARD 3

The institution has sufficient, secured financial resources for establishment and ongoing financial sustainability of its operations.

Guidance

There should be an initial establishment budget plan for the institution, showing the resources required before the institution enrolls its first students. Start-up funding must be available, so the institution cannot be reliant only on student fees to become established.

There must be a indicative 10 year budget plan for a university and an indicative 5 year budget plan for other institutions, showing all proposed or secured sources of income and proposed expenditure including: provision for insurances, taxes, superannuation, and depreciation; provision for ICT, library, maintenance and capital expenditures; and balance sheet forecasts. All potential sources of income should be considered, including support from provincial governments and from industry or business. Projections should be as realistic as possible.

The average unit cost per student may be calculated using current unit cost per student (2016) as a guide, with provision for annual indexation. A realistic proposed annual student fee structure must have been adopted.

There must be provisions for the institution's accounts to be prepared on an accrual basis and, if required, on a cash basis also.

The institution should have planned and budgeted for adequate internal financial expertise and controls to be provided, e.g. senior positions responsible for budget management and internal audit.

Proposed tender processes should have been documented. If the institution intends to offer franchised programmes (qualifications awarded by another provider) the financial arrangements must be documented.

Any applicable requirements of the *Public Finances (Management) Act* 1995 and the *Audit Act* 1989 must have been taken into account.

Financial planning should include consideration of tuition safeguards for students should the institution cease to provide a programme of study or suffer a major incident affecting its operations.

For Universities there must be a plan to develop written policies in respect of financial management of consultancy or contract research carried out by staff of the institution.

STANDARD 4

The institution has appropriate and effective governance mechanisms.

Guidance

Under section 103 of the Act, the governing body of a university must comply with the Governance Manual for universities approved by the Minister for Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology. Other non-universities are responsible for the establishment of their governing body.

The institution must have a governing body that is responsible for oversight of all of the institution's operations, including conferral of its awards, and to which management is accountable.

The governing body is accountable for the achievement of the institution's objectives.

The governing body must have a majority of external members and an external chair who is independent of the institution, including any parent companies.

The governing body must include a full range of expertise required for effective governance of the institution, including higher education expertise and independent financial expertise, through its membership and/or through external advisors.

All proposed members of the governing body and the institution's key personnel meet or will meet specified 'fit and proper' persons requirements.

Planning for the institution must consider the laws that will apply to the institution, including any applicable requirements of the *Public Finances (Management) Act 1995* and how the governing body will ensure these requirements are met.

The proposed committees of the governing body, and their terms of reference and membership, must be documented, including a finance committee.

Procedures for the conduct of meetings of the governing body, including disclosure of conflicts of interest, must also be documented.

There must be a register of proposed delegations of authority (including financial, academic and managerial delegations).

There must be a clear separation between corporate and academic governance, including a properly constituted academic board, with documented terms of reference. Arrangements for academic governance and quality assurance through an academic committee structure must be documented.

There must be adequate arrangements for student governance and representation, including a Student Representative Council, to ensure that students have legitimate formal channels for making their views known and for raising issues.

Consideration should have been given to the governance and management of any university companies.

STANDARD 5

The institution has appropriate management structures, processes and policies, including academic policies.

Guidance

There must be an appropriate and current organization chart for the institution and an appropriate committee structure.

Adequate position descriptions must be prepared for the chief executive officer (director, principal, vice-chancellor, or president) and senior management personnel, including reporting lines and requirements for annual performance review.

There must be documented plan to promote an inclusive and safe culture on campus, including appropriate security arrangements.

At least the outline of an institutional Strategic Plan must be available, including key performance indicators and targets. In considering the format of a strategic plan, the sponsoring body should also consider which other plans will be needed in future, e.g. a Teaching and Learning Plan and a Research Plan and operational plans for each discipline area.

The academic year and number and duration of semesters must have been appropriately planned.

The institution must have a comprehensive list of policies and procedures that have been developed or that will be developed, including policies in relation to the admission and exclusion of students, the conferring of awards, dual, joint or exit awards, human resource management, financial management, assessment, intellectual property, security incidents, death of a student or staff member¹.

The institution should have planned for a management information system that provides detailed comprehensive information on all students, including enrolment status, demographic details, assessment outcomes and grades, attrition and withdrawal, disciplinary action etc.

The institution must have processes for quality assurance and improvement of its academic and administrative activities, including mechanisms for obtaining feedback from staff, students and graduates (and employers) and for regular review and updating of policies and programmes. Franchised programmes must have documented procedures for quality assurance by the provider that awards the qualifications.

The institution must maintain adequate records for all its higher education operations, with appropriate confidentiality and security, and backup records.

¹The PNG chapter of the Association for Tertiary Education Management (ATEM) will be a good source of information, drawing on the resources of ATEM. Much comparative and benchmarking information, e.g. on policies, is available on the websites of universities and institutions in other countries.

There should be systems and processes to ensure against the issuing of fraudulent certificates (testamurs) or tampering with certificates.

STANDARD 6

The institution's teaching and administrative personnel are appropriate in number, qualifications, experience and skill.

Guidance

There must be plans for sufficient appropriately qualified personnel to provide academic and administrative leadership for the institution.

There must be plans for an appropriately qualified and experienced discipline leader at professorial or associate professor level to be appointed as soon as practicable to provide academic leadership for each discipline area, including developing a research culture within each discipline.

The institution must plan for adequate academic staff to teach students effectively: as a guide for face to face teaching, there should be a ratio of one lecturer to 20 students or fewer in laboratory-based disciplines (science, engineering, agriculture, health sciences etc.) and a ratio of one lecturer to 30 students or fewer in other disciplines.

Academic teaching staff must have a qualification at least one level higher than the qualification into which they teach or equivalent professional knowledge and experience.

The institution has planned for adequate professional/administrative/technical staff: as a guide a ratio of 1-2 professional/administrative/technical staff to 1 academic staff would be appropriate.

There should be a range of human resources policies and procedures, including policies on: recruitment, reward and retention (e.g. salaries, loadings, allowances, other benefits); merit-based selection and promotion processes; workload management; induction of new staff; annual performance review; staff grievance procedures; occupational health and safety. Advice on suitable policies should be sought from existing PNG universities and overseas universities.

There must be an adequate policy and resources for staff development, for both academic and professional/administrative/technical staff.

STANDARD 7

The institution's programme, teaching and assessment processes are adequate to achieve the expected student learning outcomes.

Guidance

All proposed programmes must meet the requirements of the PNG Qualifications Framework and have clearly specified learning outcomes.

There should be well-defined policies for programme development, approval and review, showing how external stakeholders, industry and discipline experts will be involved at the development and review stages. If a programme is part of a national curriculum, the institution should plan to provide input to revisions of this curriculum.

The structure and units for each programme must be specified, including admission criteria, the credit points, expected student workloads, and the teaching techniques that will be used².

Arrangements should be made for benchmarking of curricula and, if feasible, standards of student achievement against those of other reputable universities. There should be documented processes for annual collaborative internal review and improvement of units, including the use of relevant stakeholder feedback.

There should be a policy on teaching, which sets out good practices for teaching, including ways of engaging students in learning. There should be documented processes for annual collaborative review and improvement of units, including the use of student feedback, and for peer review of teaching.

There must be a policy on assessment, which includes: the use of criterion-referenced assessment; the grading scheme/s grading rubrics (descriptions); provision for moderation of assessment (second marking); examination procedures including security; and review of marks.

There should be policies on credit transfer and the recognition of prior learning³. The institution should have made plans with appropriate bodies and agencies for placements, practicums or workplace experience if these are required elements of its academic programmes, including arrangements for supervision of students on work experience and insurance.

If the institution proposes to have an arrangement in place with another entity to manage or deliver some or all of a programme on its behalf, the institution has to have effective mechanisms to manage and quality assure all aspects of the arrangement to achieve equivalent learning outcomes.

² Examples of programmes and unit outlines from other universities can be used as guides for documentation, as well as the guidance in the National Standards for Higher Education Programme Accreditation available from DHERST.

³ Advice on credit points and credit transfer can be obtained from DHERST.

STANDARD 8

The institution ensures that students have access to appropriate levels of social, welfare and academic support services.

Guidance

The institution must have made provision for adequate catering and food services to be available for students, and for staff if required⁴.

There may be some benchmarking information on the numbers of personnel for these services available from overseas universities and non-universities.

The institution must have planned for sufficient health and counselling services to meet the needs of the student body and staff, provided by appropriately qualified personnel, and for access to more specialized health and welfare services when required.

There should be documented plans to ensure students and staff have access to places of worship and facilities for religious observance, including chaplaincy services.

The institution should have planned for the social and cultural needs of students, particularly residential students, recognizing that students will have diverse cultural backgrounds. Plans should include the development of sporting or recreational facilities, clubs and societies, and the ongoing management of these activities.

The institution must ensure that students, not residing with their parents or guardians have access to safe and affordable accommodation in supervised facilities of an appropriate standard that are either established and maintained by the University or contracted to a reputable and experienced provider.

The institution has planned to meet the varying learning needs of all its students, including the provision of orientation courses and transition support (e.g. preparation for tertiary study) and ongoing academic language and learning support.

The institution should have planned for career advisory services for graduating students.

⁴ Advice on catering and accommodation is available from PNG institutions, as well as advice on the number of personnel required to for health and welfare services.

STANDARD 9

The institution has effective processes to provide, maintain and modernize learning resources.

Guidance

The sponsoring body should have planned the initial ICT and physical facilities as the first stage of a campus master plan that will ensure that there are safe, well-maintained facilities and infrastructure sufficient to achieve expected student learning and research outcomes, as appropriate to the scale, scope, location, mode of delivery and nature of the programmes of study.

Planning for ICT infrastructure needs to occur in parallel with planning for physical spaces, to ensure the physical spaces are fit for purpose. Similarly, planning for plumbing and other requirements should be 'designed ⁵in'.

The institution should have planned and budgeted for adequate computing, internal ICT systems and internet accessibility. As a guide, there should be at least one PC for every three students and one PC per student for IT subjects, with relevant software; every staff member should have a computer and an institutional email account; and reliable internet access should be available at a speed of not less than 5mbps. The campus should plan for an integrated IT system, adequate servers and, if possible, wireless access in selected spaces.

The institution should have commenced planning for the maintenance and regular upgrading of ICT systems and software (enterprise architecture), including backup and disaster recovery plans.

The institution must have planned and budgeted for adequate library and information resources for staff and students including electronic resources. As a guide, there should be full text access to at least two relevant online databases for each discipline area; subscriptions to at least 10 current top international journals for each discipline area; and at least 1500 current books from major international publishers for each discipline area, in addition to multiple copies of required texts.

The institution should have planned and budgeted for adequate physical infrastructure and space for learning, and associated furniture and fittings, including:

- electricity, gas, water and sewerage facilities
- governing body / committee meeting rooms
- an auditorium / main hall / conference room (e.g. 2 m² per person) with ICT facilities (e.g. data projection)
- lecture theatres with ICT facilities (e.g. data projection)

⁵ Benchmarking information on the size and requirements for physical facilities can be obtained from institutions in PNG and overseas and from associations of professionals.

- at least two classrooms or seminar or tutorial rooms for each discipline area
- a faculty office for each discipline area
- adequate offices and office space for all staff and private offices for health and counselling services
- secure storage for student records, financial records and examination material
- a staff room
- laboratories as required by the discipline area, and associated storage, technical and preparation rooms
- workshop facilities as relevant to each discipline area (e.g. 5m² per person)
- facilities for storage and disposal of hazardous materials, as relevant to the discipline areas
- adequate toilet facilities for staff and students; shower facilities where needed (e.g. for laboratory areas)
- student mess, cafeteria or dining area
- at least one large covered and general purpose / recreation area for use by students (at least 3m² per person)
- banking and stores or shopping facilities on campus, e.g. convenience store
- staff dining area or common room
- a transport depot and adequate vehicles
- a road and footpath network with adequate drainage
- adequate parking
- student accommodation (no more than 2 students per room with beds and study space) – see comment in Standard 8
- staff housing for academic and non-academic staff, as required
- sporting facilities
- Chapel / premises for religious observance.

The institution must start work on a campus master plan as soon as practicable, to guide infrastructure development for 5-10 years or longer.

The institution must have planned and budgeted for equipment appropriate to each discipline area, taking into account the costs of installation and maintenance/repairs. The institution must have planned a system for servicing, maintenance and repairs for all equipment including ICT.

STANDARD 10

The institution demonstrates a commitment to equity.

Guidance

The institution should demonstrate that it welcomes all persons equally.

The institution must have a statement of its equity goals. This statement could also address other equity goals relating to gender, nationality, cultural diversity, religious backgrounds and physical disability. This statement could also address other equity goals determined by the institution. The institution's policies and procedures, including admission policies and student support policies, should be consistent with these goals.

The institution should have a documented plan in respect of scholarships or other financial support for students with limited financial capacity to pay for their studies.

The institution must have identified its key stakeholders.

The institution should plan to develop a written plan for engagement with stakeholders and for community service in its local or regional communities. It should budget for the implementation of this plan.

The institution should have a documented plan for maintaining contact with alumni and an alumni association.

The institution should have identified potential collaborating institutions, agencies and universities in PNG and overseas and has considered the nature, method and extent of projected collaborative activities.

STANDARD 11

The university awards its own qualifications in at least two fields of study and offers programmes from entry level to postgraduate studies.

Guidance

A university must be planned so as to offer programmes in **at least two fields of study at bachelor level or higher incorporating a range of disciplines**. In this context a 'field of study' would mean a broad academic domain, e.g. education, agriculture, science, social sciences, technology and engineering, health sciences, business studies. A discipline is more specific, e.g. within the field of health sciences, nursing and physiotherapy would be disciplines.

The university must award its own qualification for these programmes. It therefore must have a robust internal capability in its own right to develop, accredit, and review academic programmes in several disciplines.

The university may teach additional programmes where the qualification is awarded by another university or institution under agreement.

There must be realistic plans for the university to offer **postgraduate programmes to at least master level within three years** from the commencement of operation.

There may be provision for the university to offer technical and vocational education and training as well as higher education qualifications.

STANDARD 12

The university's staff undertake research leading to the generation of new knowledge.

Guidance

The university must have documented plans to undertake research that leads to the creation of new knowledge or is original creative endeavour in all proposed discipline areas.

The university's teaching and research activities should include engagement with Indigenous/traditional knowledge and skills.

The university must have developed policies to ensure that research carried out under its auspices meets appropriate codes of conduct, safety, and ethics clearance requirements, and is consistent with legislative or other intellectual property requirements and any applicable national guidelines⁶.

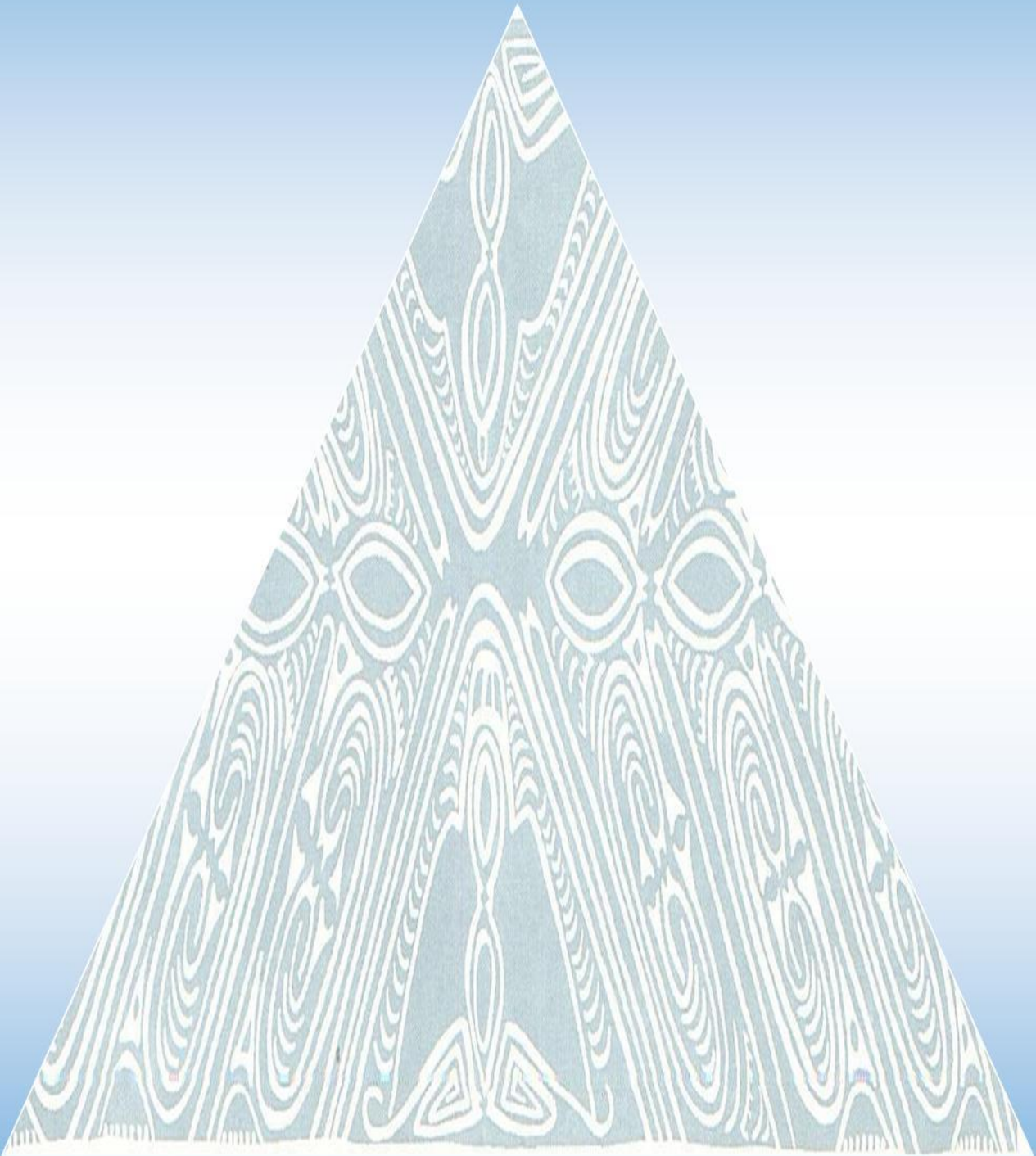
Plans for the growth of research should be developed. The university should plan for some areas of research to be internationally recognized within 10 years. While not every academic staff member needs to be research-active, all academics are expected to keep up to date with scholarly developments in their discipline. The websites of many overseas universities set out their policies for research and their research development plans, including incentives for staff to undertake research and internal small grants schemes.

There should be plans for the systematic collection of data on research outputs⁷ and procedures for the management of any external research funding authorized by the university.

The university should plan for the management and support of students undertaking research masters or doctoral degrees. Doctoral programmes should only be offered where there is appropriate supervisory expertise in the discipline area.

⁶ Guidelines on the ethical conduct of research are available from the internet, e.g. National Health and Medical Research Council.

⁷ The specifications of the Australian Government's annual Higher Education Research Data Collection (HERDC) provide a guide to the type of information that should be collected.



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