CRIS2018 extended abstract

Title:

Measuring Research in the University

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Abstract:

The Research Support System (RSS) is a web-based enterprise system that has been running in the University since 2002. It allows research staff and students to input and update their biographical data, research projects and research outputs, including scholarly publications, datasets, and conference presentations. The RSS was built as an in-house collaboration between IT Services and the Library. It contains 100,000 research outputs, many of which have been uploaded to the Institutional Repository.

In this talk we will outline 2 major researcher-led projects that were delivered using the research information from the RSS: Faculty Research Metrics and Promotions. These projects both show how the RSS can be used to measure research in the University.

Faculty Research Metrics

The Research Support System has been used to measure the research productivity of researchers since 2010. The latest approach to this is using Faculty Research Metrics (FRM). Each faculty in the University (Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (AHSS), Engineering, Mathematics and Science (FEMS) and Health Science (FHS)) defined a set of research productive criteria. Academics who met the criteria appear on the FRM Report. While HR identified the staff codes of academics, it is also possible for school administrators to set an individual's status to academic. In January, users are advised to update their RSS profiles by a deadline in February, and the FRM Report is run in March. The RSS facilitates the creation of research productive exceptions for staff, for example in the case of maternity leave or career break.

The FRM criteria are more complex than the previous research metrics and also depend on data from outside the RSS, such as the Research Proposal and Awards Management System (RPAMS).

AHSS require that all full-time academic staff should meet one of criteria A or B

In the past six-year period, be the author or co-author of a book, published by a recognised publisher

In the past four-year period, have four outputs of demonstrable high-quality in research. Output may include any combination from 15 categories of research output

FEMS allocate points over a five-year period for a wide range of different activities, including differentiating publications based on venue ranking, senior authorship and whether the publication has been cited by other authors. It also counts service to the discipline through reviewing, conference organisation and more. Research productivity is defined as meeting a threshold score. More senior academics have to reach a higher threshold due to their broader recognition and greater research productivity.

FHS allocate points over a four-year period under four headings: publications, national & international recognition, intellectual property and grants. Three thresholds exist, scaled pro rata for part-time staff, depending on the seniority of the researcher.

For each faculty, new web pages were added to the RSS to allow staff to review their FRM Scores and to identify publication that are (or are not) counted towards the FRM Score.

For senior University staff and school staff, the FRM Overview shows what percentage of academics have reached the FRM threshold. Also the FRM Report lists the academics that have reached the threshold.

Promotions

HR defined the requirements for this project based on a pre-existing paper form which had been filled out manually by promotion candidates. The RSS was able to deliver most of the requirements, except for teaching and supervision data. This may become available in future from the student administration system. The RPAMS system was the data source for grants data.

A promotions wizard has been developed in the RSS which allows the candidates to review their RSS data and link to the relevant page to edit it. At the end of this workflow, the Promotions CV is output to MS Word. The Promotions CV arranges the research information under the following headings: research & scholarship, teaching (manually edited by the candidate), service to College and engagement with discipline/society.

The RSS was modified to allow for the collation of some of these new fields e.g. entrepreneurial activities, philanthropic activity and service to discipline/society, as well as a change to representations to allow the candidate to indicate national public leadership.

Relevance for CRIS 2018

Considering FAIRness of Research Information. These projects clearly demonstrate approaches to reusing research information. This is particularly true of the Promotions project where candidates save a lot of time through generation of a report based Promotions CV rather than having to manual compile it.

Both projects were available on mobile devices and were accessible outside of the College network so qualify as tools for the mobile international researcher.

Both projects make use of Scopus and Web of Science citation counts, which are regularly automatically refreshed in the RSS, using APIs.

Keywords: