



ARMS FOUNDATION LEVEL ACCREDITATION PROGRAM POLICY DOCUMENT

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FOUNDATION LEVEL ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

A survey of ARMS members in late 2011 identified accreditation and increased professional identity as one of the greatest opportunities facing the profession. Accreditation is a means of providing independent verification of the skills and knowledge of those engaged in research management to both employers and practitioners. In response to this this need by our members, a Foundation Level Accreditation Program is now available.

The Foundation Level Accreditation Program is designed for individuals who are either:

- a) New to research management/administration (less than 5 years);
- b) Not new to research management/administration but seeking to update their knowledge;
- c) Those seeking to learn more about research administration, or
- d) Not new to research management but may be new to a specific element of it – for example, a Grants Officer moving into a specialised Research Ethics role wanting to fast track their research ethics knowledge.

This purpose of the Foundation Level ARMS Accreditation Policy Document is to provide the framework for the management, maintenance and the delivery of the Foundation Level Accreditation Program. It is the intention for this to be a “live” document and therefore to be updated as new policies are endorsed by the ARMS Executive via the Accreditation Council.

The Society plans to roll-out a professional level accreditation program (5 years + research management experience) over the 2015/2016 period and this document will be updated as appropriate, to include procedures applicable at the Professional level.

POST NOMINAL

The ARMS Executive at its meeting of 2 December 2013, endorsed the post nomial:

Accredited Research Manager (Foundation) or acronym ARM(F) for those individuals that have successfully completed all of the assessment requirements detailed in this document.

The title of **Accredited Research Manager (Professional) or acronym ARM(P)** will be awarded to individuals that have successfully completed the assessment requirements for the Professional Level Accreditation Program when offered in the future.

STEPS REQUIRED TO OBTAIN ACCREDITATION AS AN ARM(F)

There are three key requirements to obtain accreditation:

ARMS accreditation comprises three elements:

- Successful completion of five modules of learning (three compulsory and two elective) and assessment by multiple choice questions;
- Successful completion of short answer questions to a case study within 12 months of completing the last module of learning and
- Completion of 60 hours of Continuing Professional Education (CPE) over a three year period.

As there is considerable group work in each module, candidates must attend the scheduled module delivery workshops in person in order to be deemed as completing the course.

MODULES AVAILABLE FOR DELIVERY

The following Foundation level modules are currently available for delivery:

COMPULSORY MODULES

- **The National Research and Innovation System in the country of choice:** Covering the role of government, business, and higher education in the national research and innovation system; funding mechanisms; Codes and current issues.
- **Legislation as it affects research in the country of choice:** covering the most common legislative framework affecting research.
- **Understanding Research and Researchers:** The only “soft skills” module in the Foundation level program. Covers models of research, what drives researchers, how to understand and relate to researchers.

ELECTIVE MODULES

- **Research Ethics:** Covering the legislative and regulatory obligations associated with human and animal ethics and the role of ethics administrators in supporting compliance.
- **Research Integrity:** Covering the emerging international Responsible Conduct of Research Codes and examining institutional requirements of education, implementation, compliance and monitoring.
- **Pre-Award Grants Processes:** Looking at the role of research administrators in pre-award grant processes, grants development programs, supporting researchers, and ‘grantsmanship’
- **Post-Award Processes:** Financial management and reporting requirements, institutional systems to support effective post award grants management, central vs devolved models, mechanisms for interaction with finance units, faculties, researchers and funders, IT support systems.
- **Research Data and Analytics:** Management information systems, reporting, repositories, use of data to support strategy implementation; the emerging role of impact assessment.

ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

The Accreditation Council plays an important role in the accreditation process, overseeing quality standards of module content and delivery agents and providing a measure of independence from the ARMS Executive over accreditation recommendations. A list of members is available at the [ARMS website](#).

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

The Council’s **Terms of Reference** include:

1. To recommend accreditation status to the ARMS Executive for those persons who have completed requirements for certification at Foundation or Professional levels of accreditation.
2. To monitor and review content of educational modules provided by ARMS and provide advice to the ARMS Executive on changes required to ensure currency and usefulness to those engaged in research management.

3. To provide advice to the ARMS Executive on development of new modules and new market groups for ARMS educational programs.
4. To provide ongoing advice to the ARMS Executive on the design, content and assessment processes supporting accreditation such that accreditation programs and mechanisms will reflect contemporary best practice.
5. To assess research management related workshops, programs of activity or other education/training meetings, offered within institutions or by other educational providers, and recommend an appropriate credit for the purposes of ARMS Continuing Professional Education (CPE) hours.
6. To recommend to the ARMS Executive a suitable framework for assessing the Recognition of Prior Learning by existing ARMS members for the purposes of accreditation.
7. To provide strategic advice to the ARMS Executive on any other matters relating to the professional development and continuing education of research management and administration professionals.
8. The Accreditation Council reserves the right to co-opt additional members as may be needed from time to time to fulfil its purpose.

Membership comprises:

A person who served in the position of Pro or Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research)
A Person who served in the position of Director of a University Research Office
An Executive member of ARMS. Ideally, this is likely to be the President
A member who has served in the position of General Manager/Chief Operating Officer of an Independent Medical Research Institute
Two members from key Australian Agencies and/or Organisations involved in the research and innovation system, including but not limited to CSIRO, ARC, NHMRC, the CRC Association
A member drawn from key New Zealand agencies involved in research and innovation

ARMS EXECUTIVE, ARMS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE AND ITS INTERACE WITH THE ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

There are currently three main committees within the accreditation process – the ARMS Executive, the Accreditation Council and the Professional Development & Accreditation Committee. The following sets out the roles and responsibilities of each of the three committees.

The ARMS Executive – Responsible for:

- The financial viability and overall operations of the accreditation program;
- Approving membership of the Accreditation Council;

- The marketing of accreditation programs (through subcommittees and executive office support);
- Development of new modules and programs within the accreditation program, and
- Quality and standards of module material delivery.

The Accreditation Council (also refer to ToR in this document) – Responsible for:

- Quality and standards of module material (including review of existing material and new module materials);
- Quality and standards of assessment material, process and outcomes;
- Decisions concerning events on the CPE register and equivalence of training for CPE hours.

The Professional Development & Accreditation Committee - Responsible for:

- Identifying needs for new materials (modules);
- Overseeing development of new modules;
- Programming delivery of modules at Annual Conference and Chapter events (the latter in consultation with Chapter convenors); and
- Development and promotion of benefits to accredited members.

The Program Manager is currently responsible for coordinating activity between the three committees, servicing the Accreditation Council in particular, overseeing the process of developing new materials, overseeing the assessment process and working with the PD committee to identify and promote benefits to accredited members.

ARMS TRAINING FELLOWS

The Society has appointed ARMS Training Fellows. These are individuals who have been authorised by the Accreditation Council as having the knowledge, experience and skills to present the module material. A list of fellows is available at the [ARMS website](#). To become an ARMS Training Fellow, the individual must have formally responded to a call made by the ARMS Executive seeking nominations for this role. The person must have completed an approved nomination form which has been reviewed by the Accreditation Council. The Accreditation Council recommends all new ARMS Training Fellows to the ARMS Executive for its endorsement.

ARMS TRAINING FELLOWS – CONDITIONS OF APPOINTMENT

The following are the conditions of appointment of ARMS Training Fellows as approved by the Accreditation Council.

1. ARMS Training Fellows are a select group across the geographical spread of ARMS reach, who have been authorised by the Accreditation Council to deliver material for the following Foundation Level Accreditation modules:
2. The term of each appointment will be two years with renewal for a further term through an approval process as required by the Accreditation Council;
3. ARMS Training Fellows must remain “active and financial member” of ARMS during the term of their appointment;

4. ARMS Training Fellows must maintain currency in their knowledge of the approved area of delivery;
5. ARMS Training Fellows will be required to provide a report on annual activities by **31 October each year** on a template available from the Executive Office. This report will be reviewed by the Accreditation Council and the ARMS Executive and will be used to improve future delivery of the program;
6. ARMS Training Fellows undertake their work on a voluntary basis and are asked to discuss any possible workload implications with their current employer (though expenses incurred in attending workshops for module delivery will be reimbursed); and
7. ARMS Training Fellows will be required to review and add to the pool of multiple choice assessment questions which follow the delivery of their module.

Note that members of the Accreditation Council are not eligible for appointment as ARMS Training Fellows

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ACCREDITATION PROGRAM

To obtain accreditation as an ARM(F), an individual must register for and attend the scheduled workshop for five modules (three must be compulsory modules and the remaining two an elective module of the registrant's choosing). The registrant must successfully complete a multiple choice assessment for a minimum of five modules (three compulsory modules plus two electives). The multiple choice assessment requirements are summarised below:

MULTIPLE CHOICE ASSESSMENTS

- Multiple choice assessments are to be completed two weeks after notification;
- Registrants must receive a minimum score of 75% to pass a multiple choice assessment (or 15/20 questions);
- If a registrant does not pass a multiple choice assessment the first time, she/he will be given an opportunity to re-sit the assessment but with a different set of questions; and
- To be eligible to sit for a case study assessment, registrants must successfully complete and pass the multiple choice assessments for 3 compulsory and 2 elective modules.

In cases where a candidate does not pass the multiple choice question set at their second attempt they will be offered the opportunity to discuss results with the ARMS Training Fellow who delivered the module prior to sitting the assessment for a third and final time. If the candidate still fails to pass the multiple choice assessment then they will only be eligible to re-sit the assessment after attending the module a second time and paying the appropriate attendance fee.

CASE STUDY ASSESSMENTS

Upon successful completion of the multiple choice assessments for five compulsory and two elective modules, the registrant will then be invited to sit a case study assessment to obtain accreditation as an ARM(F). The case study assessment requirements are summarised below:

- Case study will be marked on the following basis:
 - **Merit Pass** – Awarded to an individual who demonstrated an exceptional understanding of the subject matter and provided responses to the question sets over and above the minimum standard. A Merit Pass is only awarded to the top 10% of candidates.

- **Pass** - Awarded to an individual who demonstrated a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter and provided good responses to the question sets completed.
- **Re-sit Assessment** - Assigned to an individual who did not demonstrate an adequate understanding of the subject matter and provided responses to the question sets below the minimum standard. A person with this score will be offered the opportunity to discuss their results with the ARMS Accreditation Program Manager and to **re-sit** another case study assessment.
- Registrants who had not successfully completed a case study assessment will be offered mentoring and given an opportunity to re-sit a different case study assessment. The Registrant will also be given feedback on their specific assessment by either the Accreditation Program Manager or the ARMS Chief Operating Officer.
- In the event that a candidate fails to pass the case study assessment on their second attempt it will be necessary to attend and re-sit such modules as the Accreditation Council deems appropriate prior to a third and final attempt.

RECORDING OF ASSESSMENT RESULTS

The ARMS Executive Office will maintain a register of all module enrolments, amendments and results of the multiple choice assessment and case study assessments in a central database. The ARMS Executive Office will establish a registration platform via the ARMS website to enable registrants to enrol and pay for modules as they become available.

TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETION OF MODULES

Modules may be completed over a three year period with an additional year offered to complete the case study assessment. Candidates may only have one deferral of the case study assessment over a six month period.

Registrants will be offered different opportunities to sit case study assessment rounds each year. These are usually held three times per year, being in May, August and November.

RIGHT TO APPEAL

Registrants will be given the right to appeal the decision of the Accreditation Council but only against administrative process issues. In such cases the appeal will be referred to an independent assessor agreed between the parties. For more information on the appeals process visit the [ARMS website](#).

POST MODULE SURVEY

Immediately following the delivery of each module workshop, registrants will be asked to complete an online survey. The feedback from this survey is important in helping to further refine the accreditation program. The Executive Office will disseminate the survey link to all candidates.

REVIEW AND UPDATE OF MODULE MATERIAL

The Accreditation Council at its meeting of 28 February, 2014 recommended that module material be updated annually. The timeframe and processes for module review will typically be June-August of a given year in time for presentation at the ARMS annual conference. This timetable may be varied by other factors including delivery of modules at Chapter events, availability of reviewers etc..

REVIEW AND UPDATE OF MULTIPLE CHOICE ASSESSMENTS

Following the delivery of ARMS module material, ARMS Training Fellows will be asked to provide additional question and answers, in addition to those provided by the module developers in order to

extend the pool of questions offered as part of this assessment. The Accreditation Council considers that each module should be supported by a bank of approximately 80 multiple choice questions.

SELECTION OF CASE STUDY ASSESSMENT MARKERS

The Accreditation Council has sought the assistance of a number of experienced research management professionals across the sector to act as case study assessors. There are currently 11 persons identified as case study assessors.

As accreditation modules continue to be offered at a local regional level, there will be an ongoing need to establish widen the pool of assessors who the ARMS Accreditation Council can call upon with sufficient notice to review case study assignments.

MAINTAINING ACCREDITATION – CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Continuing Professional Education (CPE) helps ARMS(F) members to:

- Maintain relevant knowledge;
- Develop and implement research management practices in their workplaces;
- Develop their career and
- Be an example or mentor to other research management professionals in their workplace

REQUIREMENTS

Accredited members must complete 60 hours of CPE over a three year period according to the guidelines below.

TYPES OF CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

CPE activities may comprise the following elements:

- Formal postgraduate study and other tertiary courses relevant to research administration and/or management not undertaken as part of a degree course;
- Conference attendance, workshops, seminars and other similar activities delivered or facilitated by recognised practitioners in the field of research management;
- Learning activities in the workplace which enhance research management knowledge or skills;
- Service to ARMS, sister societies or other similar bodies up to a maximum of 30 hours over a three year period;
- Preparation and/or presentation of courses, talks and other material at research management workshops and conferences;
- Any other structured activities not covered by the above but which satisfy the objectives of these Guidelines.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION REGISTER

ARMS will maintain a register of approved CPE activities on its website. Individuals or organisations may make a case at any time for inclusion of any specific event, course or workplace activity to be added to this Register. ARMS will provide a form to capture details of such activities. The ARMS Professional Development and Accreditation Committee, in conjunction with the Accreditation Council will review applications for admission of courses, workshops or other activities to the Register

RECORDING CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

Accredited members wishing to claim hours of CPE may do so at any time via completion of the CPE Claim Form at the [ARMS website](#). This form requires brief information on the type of event/activity, its applicability to research management and the ARMS accreditation program and must be countersigned by the member's line manager. Completed forms must be submitted to the ARMS Secretariat where CPE hours will be recorded against each member's profile.

CAREER BREAK PROVISION

Members who are required to take a career break (sickness, child-birth, transfer etc) will be entitled to deduct the period of career interruption in their requirement to complete 60 hours CPE in three years.

DELIVERY OF MODULE MATERIAL

The Executive Office will work with the local Chapters to coordinate the delivery of Foundation Level modules on a regular basis in keeping with the requirements of local members. The Executive Office will assist with the coordination of all operational matters relating to the delivery of the modules, such as registrations, catering, dissemination of pre-reading material to registrants, etc. The Chapter will be expected to assist with local room hire. Where possible, room bookings shall be covered by the local host institution as an in-kind contribution to the Society.

It is important that ARMS Training Fellows understand the broader context of the accreditation program in addition to the specific content of their module. For this purpose each ARMS Training Fellow should familiarise themselves with the "Guide to ARMS Training Fellows" available from the ARMS Executive Office.

Registrants will be provided with a PDF version of the Body of Knowledge document approximately 4 weeks prior to the scheduled module delivery date. Each registrant will be instructed by the ARMS Executive Office to review this document as a pre-reading requirement.

MODULE DELIVERY

Modules incorporate considerable group work and interaction and thus will be offered in face to face mode at the current time. Modules are developed to take between 3 ½ and 4 hours to deliver. Generally module workshops should comprise a minimum of 8 and maximum of 30 participants though this may be varied by discussion with the ARMS Training Fellow presenting the module workshop.

MODULE PRICING

The basic registration cost per module is \$250AU for ARMS Members and \$350AU for non-members (current for the 2015/2016 financial year) and is reviewed annually. Registration for all modules is via the member portal on the ARMS website. Any operational costs associated with the delivery of modules (such as catering, and reasonable travel and accommodation for presenters if required) and transfers etc are to be covered by the Society. The Executive Office shall prepare a budget to determine the per unit cost of module delivery.

Should organisations prefer ARMS to organise any or all operational elements, this can readily be provided at an additional 30% administrative fee.