Creating a higher degree research community
Macquarie prides itself on its international research reputation. As one of Australia’s premier teaching and research institutions, we are confident that your choice of Macquarie University for your higher degree research program will be rewarded by an exceptional experience of research training in an environment of the highest quality.

Over recent years Macquarie’s performance has been exceptional in increasing its research outputs to rank amongst the top three Australian universities in refereed publications per academic staff member and first in citation rankings in the areas of environmental science and ecology. The University has also achieved outstanding results in terms of competitive research grants especially in major grants for national Centres of Excellence. From 2011 the University will be home to two new Centres of Excellence – one in Cognition and Its Disorders and the other in Core to Crust Fluid Systems.

The University continues to pursue its vision to be acknowledged as world class in our identified Concentrations of Research Excellence (COREs). Existing areas of research strength are being enhanced, while new areas of research excellence are emerging from groups of our highly motivated staff. More top-class researchers are being appointed to our 18 Concentrations of Research Excellence, and support mechanisms for our researchers are being strengthened. This commitment to excellence has been rewarded by the results the University achieved under the Australian Government’s first ERA exercise.

ERA – Excellence in Research for Australia – is a research quality evaluation program for Australian universities, introduced by the Australian Government through the Australian Research Council. The first ERA evaluation was conducted in 2010 with results announced on 31 January 2011. ERA 2010 evaluated the quality of research publications across all areas of research from all 41 Australian universities, over the period 2003–2008.

The quality of research outputs for each discipline and sub-discipline, and for each university undertaking research in those areas, was evaluated on a 5-point scale:

- 5 – outstanding performance well above world standard
- 4 – performance above world standard
- 3 – average performance at world standard
- 2 – performance below world standard
- 1 – performance well below world standard

Results from the ERA initiative ranked Macquarie University as fourth in the country based on the proportion of our research judged to be at the highest possible level. Our research performance was rated as outstanding and well above world standard in biological, Earth, environmental and physical sciences, as well as in cognitive sciences and psychology. In total 80 per cent of Macquarie’s research activity was rated as performing at world standard or higher.

Our Macquarie Research Excellence Scholarship program has been expanded to enable well-prepared candidates to undertake doctoral studies at Macquarie.

We value our higher degree research student body as a key asset of the University, and recognise the vital contribution our research candidates make to the University and the nation. We are continuously improving the processes, including commencement programs, annual postgraduate research conferences, and international research experiences, that assist postgraduate researchers to complete their programs successfully, with the highest quality outcomes.

The Higher Degree Research Office offers specialised support for higher degree research candidates. In addition to looking after both domestic and international applications and admissions, the office administers all higher degree research scholarships, including those schemes supported directly by the University.

The Dean of Higher Degree Research has specific responsibility for framing the academic support programs and pastoral care for higher degree research candidates, including liaison with the academic disciplines and student representatives, and above all, ensuring the quality of the outcome for research candidates and the University.

I welcome your interest in undertaking a higher degree research program at Macquarie University and urge you to contact our staff to investigate fully the opportunities available for you to gain an advanced research degree of the highest international standing.

Professor Jim Piper
Deputy Vice-Chancellor – Research