

# INTRODUCTION TO RESEARCH IN THE HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

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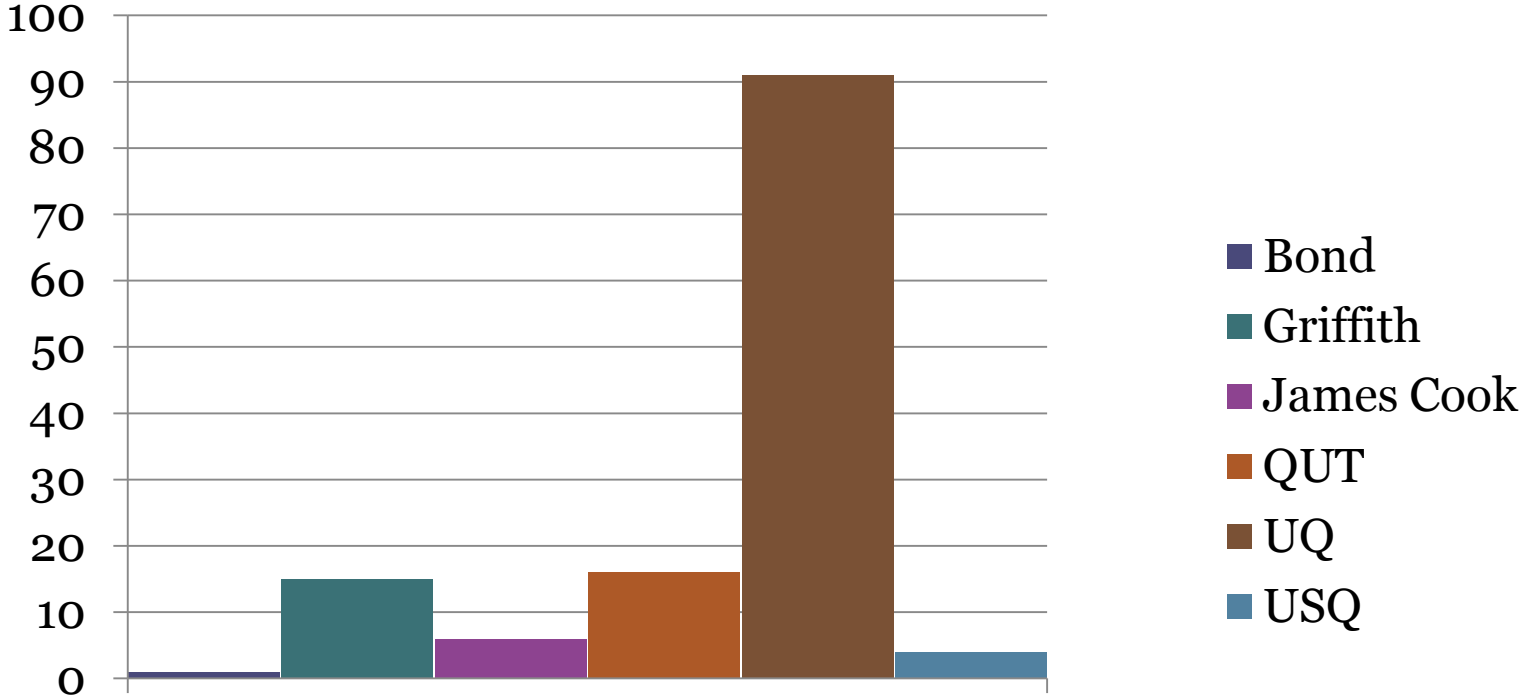
# University of Queensland - Excellence through teaching and research

- The University of Queensland (UQ) is one of Australia's premier learning and research institutions. It is the oldest university in Queensland and has produced almost 197,000 graduates since opening in 1911. Its graduates have become leaders in all areas of society and industry.
- UQ is a pacesetter in discovery and translational research across a broad spectrum of exciting disciplines, ranging from bioscience and nanotechnology to mining, engineering, social science and humanities.
- Its eight internationally significant research institutes are drawcards for an ever-expanding community of scientists, researchers and commercialisation experts.
- UQ offers undergraduate and postgraduate programs that are informed by the latest research and delivered in state-of-the-art learning spaces. Its teachers have won more Australian Awards for University Teaching than any other Australian university.
- Today, UQ has almost 44,000 students who study across its four main campuses in southeast Queensland: St Lucia, Ipswich, Gatton and Herston.

# UQ is one of the World's Best Research- Intensive Universities

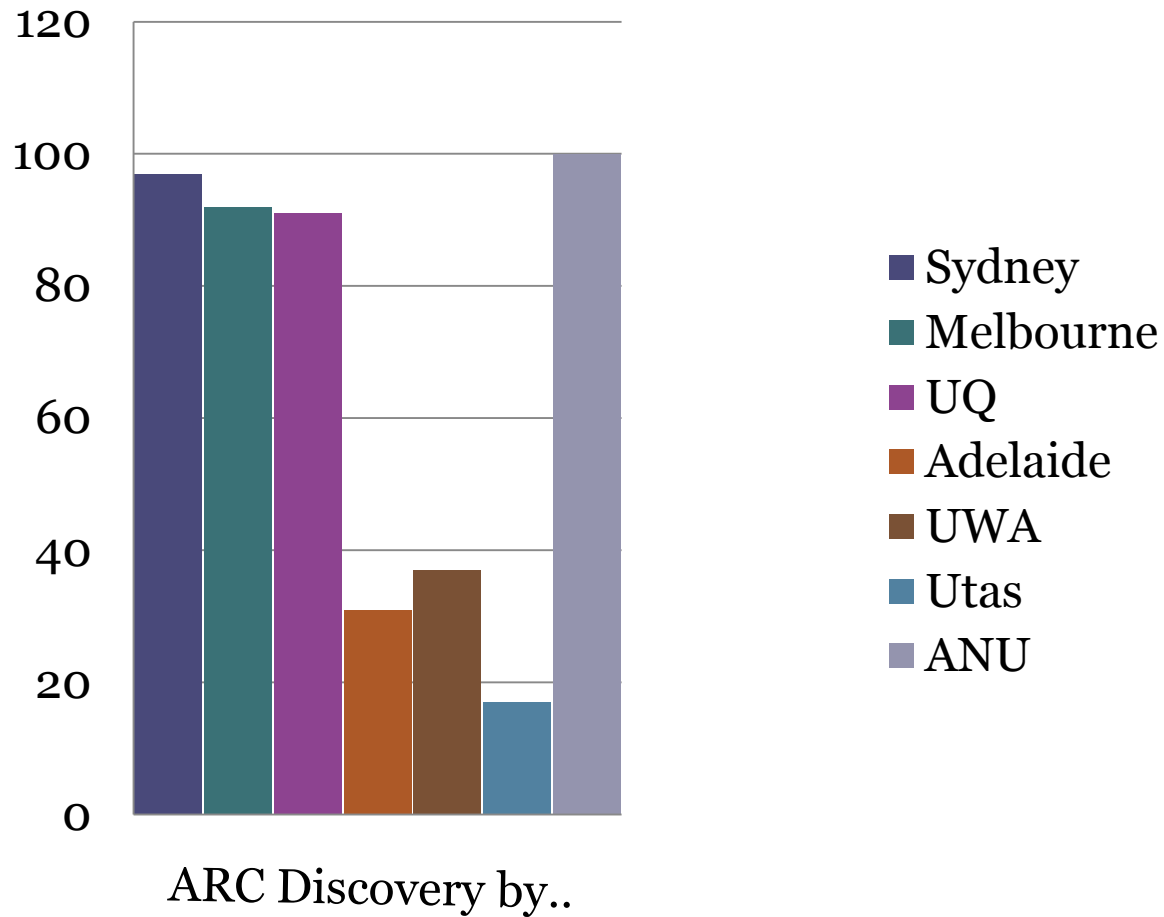
- High success rate in attracting competitive research grants
- High success rate in ARC Federation fellowships
- UQ aims to attract the best and smartest (aim: 1/4 of all enrolments at PG level)
- International standing of UQ (most recently ranked 35 in the world).

# ARC Grants at UQ



Number of ARC Grants by HighEd Institution in QLD

# ARC Discovery Grants



# Australian University Research Rankings - 2010

## Australian University Research Rankings 2010

(added 1st Feb 2011)

**KEY (Research Ratings Table) rated 0 - 5 (- = n/a):**

**C1** = physical, chemical and earth sciences

**C2** = humanities and creative arts

**C3** = engineering and environmental sciences

**C4** = social, behavioural and economic sciences

**C5** = mathematical, information and computing sciences

**C6** = biological and biotechnological sciences

**C7** = biomedical and clinical health sciences

**C8** = public and allied health sciences

Australian Research Council (ARC)

University	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6	C7	C8	Research Breadth 0-25	Average Score 1-5
1. Australian National University	4.7	4.6	4	4	4.5	4	5	5	21	4.38
2. University of Melbourne	4.7	4.5	3.7	4.2	4.7	4	5	4	24	4.33
3. University of Queensland	4.3	4	5	4	3.7	4.3	5	4	24	4.17
4. University of NSW	4	4.2	3.7	4.2	4	4	5	3	23	4.04
5. University of Sydney	4	4.2	3.7	3.4	4	3	5	4	24	3.83
6. University of Western Australia	3.7	3.2	3.5	3.4	3.5	5	5	4	22	3.64
7. University of Adelaide	4.3	3.5	4	2.4	3	4.5	5	4	22	3.55
8. Monash University	4	3.7	5	3.2	2.7	3	5	2	22	3.45
9. Macquarie University	4.3	3	4	2.8	2.5	5	2	3	21	3.24
10. Queensland University of Technology	3.7	3	3.3	2.6	4	2	3	4	22	3.09
=11. Griffith University	4	3	2.3	2.6	3	3.5	3	3	22	3
=11. Melbourne College of Divinity	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
13. University of Technology Sydney	3	3	2	3	3	4	2	3	19	2.95
14. University of Tasmania	4	2.8	3	1.8	3	3.5	3	2	21	2.81
=15. University of Newcastle	3	2.5	3	2.2	2.5	4	4	3	21	2.71
=15. University of Wollongong	3.7	3.4	3	1.6	2	3	3	3	21	2.71
17. Murdoch University	3	2.6	2.5	2	-	3.5	5	2	17	2.65
18. La Trobe University	2.3	3.4	2	2.4	1.5	4	2	2	20	2.62
=19. RMIT University	3	3	3	1.8	2.5	2	4	3	18	2.61
=19. University of South Australia	5	2.8	3.5	1.6	2.5	2	3	3	18	2.61
21. Curtin University	3.7	2.6	2.3	2	2.5	2.5	2	2	22	2.5
22. University of Western Sydney	3	2.7	2	2	2	3.5	2	3	21	2.48
23. James Cook University	3	2.5	3.5	1.8	2	3.5	2	1	19	2.47
24. Flinders University	2.7	2.4	2	2.2	-	3	3	2	18	2.44
25. Deakin University	2.5	2.3	3	1.8	1	3	4	4	22	2.41



# The meaning of 'research'

- Systematic investigation to establish facts
- Form of inquiry: a systematic search for knowledge
- Answers to why questions. More specifically an answer to a why question which makes something which once appeared puzzling seem obvious.
- Looking below the surface – looking for things that are not obvious.

# SOCIAL SCIENCE

What is the relationship with 'proper' (natural) science?

Similarities – Answers why questions, explanation/prediction (the former is easier than the latter), rigorous methods, transparency, falsification, application.

Differences – contact hours! People, prediction (the traffic jam problem), methods of control (the role of controlled experiments).

# Examples of research projects in Humanities and Social Sciences

- Conflict resolution in Solomon Islands (ACPACS)
- Study of children with developmental disabilities (Ed)
- Responses to Unemployment(SW&HS)
- Communication ethics (SJC)

# The meaning of ‘research’ from a student’s point of view

- ‘Go and do some research’ **doesn’t** mean:  
‘Find out something no one has ever discovered or thought of before’
- It **nearly always** means:  
*‘Find, read and analyse the best sources for what is known already’*

# ‘Research’ and ‘Analysis’

- Analysis takes you beyond simply reporting on what you’ve found out. But it is also more than just your own opinions.
- So it’s not just ‘I think Jones’s book is wonderful’... but
- ‘Smith (2005: 20) argues that ... This position contradicts the assumptions used in the work by Jackson (2003) because...’

# ‘Research’ and ‘Criticism’

- Being critical is not the same as being negative
- So you should not say that ‘Jackson’s contribution to theoretical physics is useless’....  
But
- ‘In his work on particle physics, Jackson (2004) overlooks what is now accepted as one of the key aspects of modern physics...

# Your 'research' will primarily consist of ...

- Finding material on a given subject (what? where from?)
- Evaluating its **credibility** (accurate?, up-to-date? says who?)
- Using it to find further sources (always check bibliography)
- Selecting, copying and storing/organising the relevant bits so you can use them later in your analysis

# THE BASICS

You need to learn to manage your own time effectively.

You need to balance research with (paid) work and (very occasionally) socialising.

When researching you need to balance reading, thinking and writing.

There is an input-output relationship (reading and thinking does pay-off). But the relationship is not linear.

# THE BASICS (cont.)

- Attendance has emerged as the best predictor of academic performance - better than more commonly studied influences such as intelligence and personality - in a pioneering British study.

“Men Come Second on Attendance” - by Bernard Lane,  
*The Australian*, 22 March 2006, p. 26

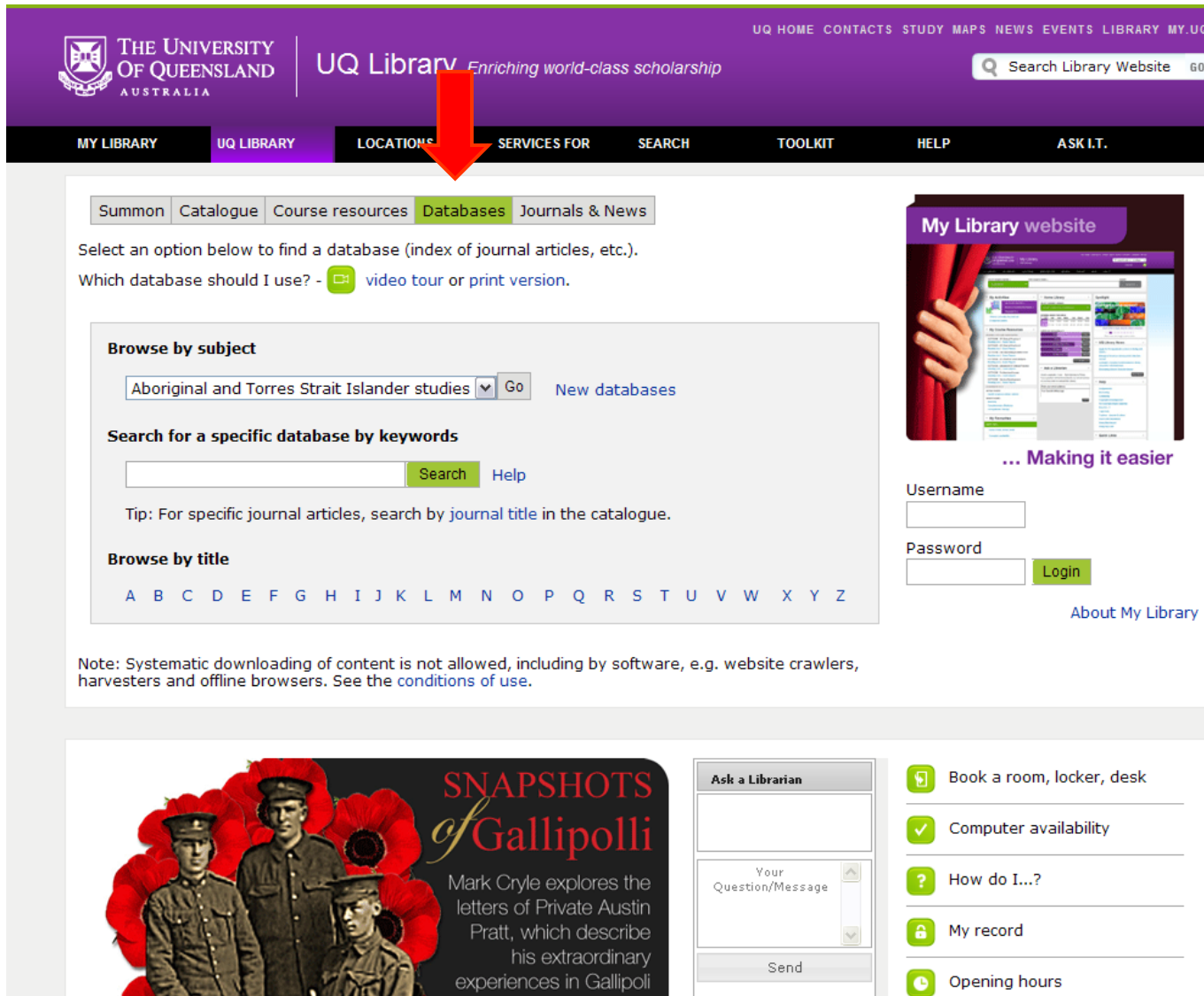
# THE BASICS

- Make use of dictionaries relevant to your subject area
- Use the **reference section** of the UQ library for other printed sources. In later years you might obtain a few reference books in subjects you specialise in.
- Use relevant text books
- Limitations of **Wikipedia**

## BASICS (cont.)

- Use on-line materials provided through the UQ library (they are regularly updated)
- Use data bases available through UQ Library web portal

# UQ Library



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When I was an undergraduate ... library research meant ....



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# THE BASICS (cont.)

- You need access to a computer with internet access to look at the library catalogue, receive emails from your tutors, etc, and also for research:
  - databases, articles in electronic journals, internet searches, group assignment work
  - UQ enrolment gives students email plus some free internet access.

# Where to find research materials?

## UQ Libraries

- There are five libraries at St Lucia alone:  
(Biological Sciences; Law; Architecture & Music; Physical Sciences & Engineering; Social Sciences & Humanities)
- Enroll in **library courses** on:
  - How to use library facilities
  - How to use databases
- On-line resources
  - Research Journals

# What if you can't find the books that you need?

- Put a hold on so you get it next
- Request lecturer or librarian to put it in the high-use section etc.
- Try other libraries
- Consider alternative resources

# THE BASICS (cont.)

- Take your UQ email account seriously. Your teachers, course coordinators, tutors, administrators will be expecting you to use it regularly.

# THE BASICS (cont.)

- **READ MY LIPS:** Your computer **will** crash during your UQ studies.
- If your computer crashes there are on-campus facilities in the libraries & at ITS
- Remember to be paranoid
  - back up your documents regularly
  - email copies of your work to a friend (or yourself)
- Get a good anti-virus program and keep it up to date

# In my research, what should I consult ...

*... an encyclopaedia, an academic book or journal, a popular magazine, a database or an internet site?*

- Is this *exactly* on the topic?
- Is it likely to be up-to-date?
- Is the author reliable? Why have they written this? Who are they writing for?
- What do I want the source for?
- Don't forget to ask yourself: what exactly is expected of me in this essay?

# Organisation of obtained information...

What (if anything) should I do with information?

- Notes - easiest for short summaries and to record your search path and any dead ends
- Photocopy - don't forget the endnotes and where it came from - source, page no.
- Cut and copy from websites - don't forget the URL and date accessed.

# Referencing

- Don't forget to keep a record of where you got it from and, for websites, when
- Different disciplines (history, literary studies, social studies ...) have different citation systems.

**FIND OUT WHAT SYSTEM YOU ARE  
EXPECTED TO USE!**

# Referencing system: pay attention to detail! (what is wrong here?)

- Harris, Ruth. 2000. *Lourdes: Body and Spirit in the Secular Age*. London: Penguin.
- Hastings, Adrian (1997) *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hobsbawm, Eric. 1994. *The Age of Extremes: A History of the World, 1914-91*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Horsfall, Sara. 2000. 'The experience of Marian apparitions and the Mary Cult', *The Social Science Journal* 37(3): 375-84.
- Jarman, Neil. 1997 *Material Conflicts: Parades and Visual Displays in Northern Ireland*. Oxford and New York: Berg.

## Two key reasons why referencing is important:

- Good research/essays are well referenced
- Improper referencing is seen as masking plagiarism


# The University has defined plagiarism as:

- "Plagiarism is the act of misrepresenting as one's own original work the ideas, interpretations, words or creative works of another. These include published and unpublished documents, designs, music, sounds, images, photographs, computer codes and ideas gained through working in a group. These ideas, interpretations, words or works may be found in print and/or electronic media."
- For more information visit:  
<http://www.library.uq.edu.au/training/plagiarism.html>

# In summary:

- Research is central to everyone at UQ
- Get informed: enrol in library, IT, etc courses
- Get on top of basic things quickly (later you may not have time for them)
- Be well organised (start work on your research/exams/essays early)
- Ask questions, attend lectures/tutorials/seminars and be proactive

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