LAW AND JUSTICE FOUNDATION RESEARCH GRADES – CORE COMPETENCIES

* To be used as a tool for:
  + Assisting with recruitment, staff development, promotion, performance review and performance management.
* One of a number of factors to be considered in promotion/salary and other decisions:
  + Needs of LJF (type of work, type and scale of projects, etc)
  + Financial situation of LJF (what we can afford)
  + Overall balance within LJF (while only the research functional group has career progression potential within the Foundation, performance must be recognised and salaries must be equitable across the whole organisation)
  + Individual achievement of competency levels
* There are three broad levels:
  + Research Assistant, Researcher
  + Senior Researcher
  + Principal Researcher/Senior Principal Researcher.
* The widest range is at the Senior Researcher level. Is likely to be the main working grade within the group.
* Senior Principal Researcher. This is a position appointed at the Director’s discretion, to recognise a Principal Researcher of appropriate standing/performance/reputation.

The table following outlines the expected level of performance for each research grade, additional to the grade(s) below.

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|  | **Competency** | **RESEARCH ASSISTANT** | **RESEARCHER** | **SENIOR RESEARCHER** | **PRINCIPAL RESEARCHER** |
| 1 | Strategic Research planning | * Awareness of the research planning cycle * Aware of how own work fits into the strategic plan | * Good awareness of the research planning process * Aware of progress across the research plan * Able to identify future areas of work for consideration * Developing awareness of national and international literature that bears on the Foundation’s research work | * Can identify opportunities for research that fit within the Foundation’s objects and priorities * Able to contribute to the development of the Foundation’s strategic plan * Has good awareness of national and international literature that bears on the Foundation’s research work | * Ability to make sound contributions to the development of the Foundation’s research strategies that reflect research expertise and a nuanced understanding of the Foundation’s strategic environment * Can identify links and opportunities between different programs within the Foundation’s work |
| 2 | Research design and implementation | * Understands that different research designs are appropriate for different questions and can give examples * Ability to assist with the design and planning of research projects * Ability to undertake basic tasks in the implementation and delivery of research projects | * Good awareness of the principles of research design * Developing awareness of the range of methodologies and their strengths and weaknesses in answering different research questions * Can apply this knowledge to prepare appropriate research proposals * Ability to plan and project manage small research projects * Can produce first drafts of data collection instruments, such as questionnaires * Can undertake interviews and observations with supervision | * Ability to lead in research design and prepare quality research proposals * Ability to plan and project manage more complex research projects * Can demonstrate awareness of a wide range of methodologies and identify the most appropriate to answer a specific research question * Able to adapt plans in light of unexpected circumstances * Can organise resources to deliver within agreed timescales and budgets * Able to develop resilient and flexible research designs * Able to design high quality data collection instruments, including questionnaires * Can undertake interviews without supervision | * Expert in research design * Ability to innovate and provide analytical leadership in research design * Ability to lead, develop (including individual training and mentoring) a team to be able to conduct and report on research to the highest possible standard * Expert and experienced in a range of methodologies of high relevance to the Foundation, and be able to quickly obtain the necessary skills and/or input to be able to employ other methodologies |
| 3 | Analysis | * Has functional understanding of basic qualitative and quantitative methods to collate and analyse data * Experienced in the use of basic statistics to collate and analyse data accurately * Willing to develop additional analysis skills * Can quality assure own analysis | * Skilled in one or more analysis techniques (eg. survey, data mining, systematic reviews, interview analysis, inferential statistical analysis, economic analysis, legal analysis) * Good application of the relevant software (NVIVO, SPSS, MLwiN etc.) required for their role | * Has a high level of capability in applying a wide range of analytical techniques or particular expertise in one or more specialist techniques of priority importance to the Foundation * Good awareness of a wide range of analytical techniques and when they should be utilised | * Familiar with analytical techniques emerging in empirical legal and related research around the world * Expert in a number of analytical techniques that are of priority importance to the Foundation * Able to provide effective oversight of analysis conducted both in own and other teams * Able to set out appropriate analytical standards |
| 4 | Use of evidence | * Awareness of the factors affecting the quality of evidence | * Can assess the quality of evidence and give a reasoned argument * Can design and undertake a basic literature search, by identifying appropriate key terms and literature sources * Is developing peer review skills | * Can synthesise evidence from a number of sources, taking account of their relative quality and applicability * Ability to take sole responsibility for quality literature searches * Can apply sound peer review skills | * Can provide expert advice to the Director on the appropriate use of evidence * Can provide an excellent standard of peer review |
| 5 | Delivery | * Manages own time effectively * Identifies potential problems and brings these to the attention of their supervisor * Ability to deliver work to agreed deadlines | * Developing project planning skills: breaking tasks down and identifying co-dependents and contingencies * Ability to deliver work in accordance with targets and deadlines * Ability to complete work to good standards (and short reports to publishable standards) and timelines | * Can take responsibility for the day to day management of projects and ensure they are delivered cost effectively – seeking advice as appropriate * Ability to complete publishable quality work including that requiring the supervision of project staff, to agreed standards and timelines. * Seeks and acts on internal and external feedback on draft research reports and other analytical products * Can demonstrate a good record of publication within Foundation research series or elsewhere * Can directly manage any external contractors * Is aware of the (staff and other) cost of projects and considers how they can be delivered most cost-effectively | * Able to plan and deliver the highest quality research reports on time and with planned resources, incorporating the effective coordination of other staff to achieve this * Can actively identify opportunities to promote the work of the Foundation and evaluation within the sector * Can harnesses external expertise where this is cost-effective |
| 6 | Communication | * Uses clear and appropriate verbal communication * Written communication is clear and effective * Can prepare short reports: presenting data appropriately and interpreting correctly * Capable of preparing PowerPoint presentations * Demonstrates accurate level of proof-reading * Complies with Foundation styles and templates in all forms of communication. | * Skilled in planning and writing own research reports, with support from senior staff * Is developing the ability to present complex information in a clear and persuasive narrative * Can adapt written and oral communication style to a range of customers * Has helpful and supportive communication style, both internally and externally * Developing oral presentation skills | * Can confidently represent the Foundation at external events * Can present findings, both orally and written, clearly and convincingly * Can provide internal review of Foundation research reports as required * Can present complex information in a clear and persuasive narrative * Ability to represent the Foundation and present findings to stakeholder audiences, locally, to all parts of the sector, and nationally and internationally | * Written reports may benefit from peer review but this will not always be necessary * Can produce briefings, comprehensive reviews and project reports at a standard of national excellence * Ability to quality assure communications across the Foundation’s research work * Capable of actively identifying opportunities to represent the Foundation at external events |
| 7 | Effective working | * Keeps manager informed of progress * A supportive team member willing to work flexibly across teams * Abides by the Foundation’s procedures and policies * Willing to work as directed * Actively seeks feedback on performance | * Proactive in managing own workload to ensure effective utilisation * Willingness and ability to provide advice and support to the Grants team as required * Ability to consult and negotiate with other Foundation staff and/or stakeholders * Builds constructive relationships, showing awareness of other’s perspectives * Can work under pressure and manage changing priorities * Aware of own development needs and actively seeks appropriate development opportunities and formal training | * Able to effectively manage the work of Researchers and Research Assistants as required * Able to agree and communicate clear and appropriate objectives to staff * Can provide timely and constructive feedback to staff * Able to provide mentoring support for Researchers and Research Assistants to enable them to expand their contribution * Can confidently liaise, consult and negotiate with stakeholders at a high level * Can support staff in managing change * Able to manage diversity effectively * Can motivate staff to deliver efficiently and effectively * Able to ensure staff are receiving appropriate development and training | * Ability and demonstrated willingness to effectively manage staff of all grades and disciplines * Ability to manage, coordinate and develop a research team * Ability to work collaboratively with Foundation Managers to ensure the research program is appropriately resourced, taking account of shifting priorities and future demands * Ability to assess training needs of the research team and implement appropriate training strategy * Ability and willingness to improve Foundation processes * Ability to deal effectively and appropriately with poor performance. |
| 8 | Sector knowledge | * Has an interest in developing knowledge of the sector | * Has a good awareness of the Australian legal system and legal assistance sector and how agencies differ in service provision * Aims to keep up to date with relevant research literature * Aims to keep up to date with published policy and operational developments in the sector | * Has a good understanding of the sector and associated bodies * Can establish and foster relationships and appropriate networks * Ability to use network to keep up to date with developments in the sector | * Expert understanding of the sector and associated bodies * Has extensive experience of fostering relationships and appropriate networks. |